

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting  
NIRPC/Forum Building, Portage, IN  
October 18, 2012  
Minutes

Chairman Geof Benson called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.

Commissioners present included Nancy Adams, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Bob Carnahan, Tom Clouser, Anthony Copeland, Jeff Dekker, Stan Dobosz, Don Ensign, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Jeff Freeze, Ken Layton, Richard Ludlow, Tom McDermott, Blair Milo, Ed Morales, Richard Murphy, Brian Novak, Don Parker, Shawn Pettit, Jim Polarek, Pamela Richard, Bob Shafer, Tom Schmitt, Brian Snedecor, Joe Stahura, Greg Stinson, James Ton, David Uran and George VanTil.

Others present included Bob Alderman, Keith Benman, Art Biciunas, Doreen Carey, Joe Crnkovich, Angie Fegaras, Kathy King, A.J. Monroe, Jim Nowacki, Craig Phillips.

Staff present included John Swanson, David Hollenbeck, Mitch Barloga, Bill Brown, Sarah Geinosky, Allen Hammond, Angie Hayes, Eman Ibrahim, Kathy Luther, Amanda Pollard, Meredith Stilwell and Mary Thorne.

Geof Benson announced that the vote on the contract for the Executive Director would be tabled. In response to a question, Chairman Benson explained the process charged to the Executive Director Search Committee to select a final candidate for the Executive Director's position. Confidentiality was a requirement for the candidates who were still employed elsewhere. Since Mr. Swanson was retired, confidentiality was not an issue when he was hired. An Executive Session of the Full Commission will meet on a date to be determined, after which a brief public meeting will be held with a vote and the hiring of the next director. John Swanson's contract expires on December 31. The Executive Session will be held to allow input from the commissioners; all should attend.

On a recommendation by Ken Layton, the Executive Director Search Committee, having discharged all duties with which it was charged, was disbanded by Chairman Benson.

Presentation: Bill Hanna presented on projects funded through the Regional Development Authority, providing \$210 million in investments in Gary, Whiting, Portage, Burns Harbor, East Chicago, Valparaiso, Merrillville, Hammond and Porter. These projects provided 2,000 permanent jobs and over \$1 billion in return on their investment.

Brian Snedecor reported that the Finance & Personnel Committee recommended the agreement for legal services to be awarded to Blachly, Tabor, Bozik & Hartman which was the only response received to the RFP. Brian Snedecor motioned to approve the agreement for legal services, Karen Freeman-Wilson seconded; motion carried. Brief discussion followed. Kathy Luther reported that NIRPC solicited an RFQ for technical support for a Donnelly grant for green infrastructure projects. Conservation Design Forum was selected from five applicants scored by a group of NIRPC staff and outside parties. Kevin Breitzke motioned to approve; seconded by Tom McDermott; motion carried. Brian Snedecor motioned to approve the committee's recommendation for the purchase of two vehicle expansions for North Township Dial-a-Ride; George VanTil seconded; motion carried. Resolution 12-20 called for the Commission to pick up 1.5% of the employee mandatory contribution for the Indiana Public Employees'

Retirement Fund (PERF) for member staff in lieu of a 1.5% pay increase. This will save NIRPC about \$8,000 in taxes. Brief discussion followed. On a motion by Brian Snedecor and a second by Shawn Pettit, the commission approved the PERF contribution. Resolution 12-21 called for adoption of the 2013 NIRPC budget, which is a 7.5% reduction over the 2012 budget for a total of \$3,347,416. Brian Snedecor motioned to approve; Jeff Freeze seconded; motion carried. Resolution 12-23 transfers rolling stock to Terre Haute of 3 buses unused due to the Regional Bus Authority shutdown. Our other transit operators were given the option first. Brian Snedecor motioned to approve, Kevin Breitzke seconded; motion carried.

Report of the Chair: Chairman Benson attended a conference of the NARC Board of Directors in Boise, Idaho in September. Dave Shafer is president; Benson was named co-chair of the NARC Environment Committee. The next meeting is in Washington D.C. on February 10-12, 2013. The next meeting of the Lake Michigan Marina & Shoreline Development Commission will be on November 15 at 10:30 a.m. at NIRPC. On Tuesday from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Portage Lakefront Pavilion, the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is holding a public meeting on the draft EIS of the shoreline plan to curb erosion west of Michigan City. The 2013 NIRPC Nominating Committee was appointed by Chairman Benson and consists of Ken Layton, Tom McDermott, Kevin Breitzke, Karen-Freeman Wilson, and Geof Benson to decide the slate for the Executive Board and officers with voting by the full Commission in January. The Norman Tufford Award Committee citizen member will be Chuck Oberlie.

The minutes of the September 20th meeting were approved on a motion by Bob Schaefer and a second by Kevin Breitzke.

On a motion by Kevin Breitzke and a second by Stan Dobosz, the consent agenda was approved.

Stan Dobosz reported on the Transportation Policy Committee meeting held last month. Mitch Barloga reported on the Pro Walk/Pro Bike Conference at Long Beach, CA. Hubert Morgan presented the draft Public Participation Plan. Action to adopt the plan as well as the Urban Area Boundary will be taken at the December meeting. Gary Evers explained Amendment 20 to the FY 2012-15 TIP. On a motion by Stan Dobosz and a second by Shawn Pettit, the amendment was approved. The next meeting is November 13 at 9:00 a.m.

Nancy Adams reported the *Pathway to 2040* Committee held a meeting on October 11 to discuss the CRP video RFP. The Commission was invited to go to the Packer Room after the meeting to offer their ideas and comments.

Bob Alderman, Deputy Commissioner for INDOT-LaPorte District reported that INDOT has begun winter preparations. The Martin Luther King Bridge in Gary will open a week from Friday. The SR 49-Vale Park interchange work is on schedule. Other requests from municipalities are being received.

Roosevelt Allen, Jr. reported on the September 21 Northwest Indiana Economic Development District meeting. Patrick Lyp is legal counsel. The CEDS committee meets regularly. The call for projects to be included in the CEDS was extended to October 15. Don Koliboski is charged with the outreach program in the three counties. Bids were received for the website design and a local vendor was selected from Hobart. Preparations are underway in seeking an operations funding grant. Kelly Wenger has complied with all reporting requirements and we are in compliance with EDA requirements. The next meeting is tomorrow at 9:30 a.m.

During the public comment section of the meeting, Jim Nowacki commented on the RDA-funded projects, the rolling stock transfers and the public's input on regional growth. Bob Carnahan commented that Cedar Lake Elementary was one of eight schools nationally to receive the National Blue Ribbon Award from the U.S. Department of Education. Kathy King encouraged more interconnection of public transportation and continued environmental stewardship. Roosevelt Allen expressed his satisfaction with the interlocal cooperation and resource sharing by communities. Tom McDermott added that Hammond has mutual aid agreements with several municipalities. Also assistance came to Crown Point from Lake and Porter communities after a microburst occurred there. Kevin Breitzke thanked NIRPC staff for their volunteer work at the Adopt-a-Beach Clean Up Day on a recent Saturday at Haven Hollow Park.

Report of the Executive Director: John Swanson reported that staff collected over 68 lbs. of trash during the Adopt-A-Beach Clean Up Day. A brownfield assessment grant proposal will be submitted jointly by NIRPC and the RDA. NIRPC must consider changing its enabling legislation because under MAP-21, new representation is required by state officials and transit operators to the NIRPC policy board. New representation must be enacted by 10/1/14. NIRPC was well-regarded and presented at the IMPO conference in Bloomington this week. Dave Shafer, the first NARC president from Indiana, gave the opening remarks. A video produced by the Indiana Department of Public Health was shown on Complete Streets and Mitch Barloga was interviewed. Two awards were presented, one of which was for best project in the state, and it went to the George Lake Pedestrian Bridge in Hammond. John Swanson presented the award to Mayor Tom McDermott.

Chairman Benson reminded the Commission that a Finance & Personnel Committee meeting and an Executive Session and public meeting to vote on the contract for the new executive director will be convened at a date to be determined.

On a motion by David Uran and a second by Stan Dobosz, Chairman Benson adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.