

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting
Woodland Park, 2100 Willowcreek Road
Portage, IN
December 13, 2013
Minutes

Chairman Dave Uran called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions of the commissioners.

Commissioners present included Nancy Adams, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., John Bayler, Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Robert Carnahan, Christine Cid, Tom Clouser, Anthony Copeland, Jon Costas, Dave Decker, Jeff Dekker, Stan Dobosz, Craig Earley, Don Ensign, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Jeff Freeze, Tom Goralczyk, Michael Griffin, Rosalie Jacobs, Richard Ludlow, Tom McDermott, Blair Milo, Ed Morales, Rich Mrozinski, Rich Murphy, Diane Noll, Anthony Pampalone, Jim Polarek, Pamela Richard, Mark Ritter, Greg Sanchez, Bob Schaefer, Tom Schmitt, Dave Shafer, Jim Simmons, Brian Snedecor, James Snyder, Keith Soderquist, Ed Soliday, Joe Stahura, Greg Stinson, James Ton, and David Uran.

Others present included Rick Marquis, Bob Alderman, Michael Jabo, Jerry Herzog, Mark Kopil, Elizabeth Johnson, Katie Kukielka, Philip Roth, Carole Carlson, Jim Earl, Jim Pinkerton, AJ Monroe, Karl Bermer, Angie Fegaras, Ken Price, Art Biciunas, Benjamin Falkowski, Jean Hulse, Frank O'Reilly, Rick Niemeyer, Ed Feltz, Renetta DuBose, Dan Gardner, Atlanta Rosiar, Dan Babic, William Rajski, Bobby Jick, Chris Murphy, M. Puente, Brian Thubart, Charles Cooper, Paul Crouse, Tom VanderWoude, Donna Slikas, David Kramer, Rory Robinson, David Wright, Terry Ferrell, Deb Backhus, Jim Wiseman, Chris Meyers, John Carr, Jon Covault, Jim Dedelow, Lara Gonzalez, Garry Campbell Jr. Chris Tucker, Rodney Thornton, Anthony Torres, Dan Swagger, Chris Cruz, Tom Rogelko, JohnMarkos, Brad Tabor, Kyle Reid, Robert Cook, Mary Cole, Michael Collins, Jason Fiegle, James Mellon, John Smallwood, George Antos, Pete Cubit, Scott Hawkin, David Hedrick, Ed Hudson, William Netzer, Dan Hughes, Rick Brownfield, Scott Hemponius, Paul Rodlecki, Paul Moon, Eric Szelinski, Dwayne Marsh, Jim Rowan, Jason Zeilstra, Dan Todosijevic, Dewey Pearman, Gilbert Garcia, Eviberto Huizar, Don Kooy, Nell Faborah, Mack Richardson, Jaffy Porter, Brandon Jacobs, Nick Gladdis, Derek Gatlin, Mark Benoit, Doug Slone, Bob Hughes, Jason Matthews, Kendra Manns, Mark Chandler, Lance McGill, Ben McGill, Nathan Long, Dan Opatkiewicz, Tom Douglas, T. Rhoda, Enrique Feliciano, Tom Hendron, Chris Henandez, Dwight Marsh, Brad Hough, Evan Simcar, Jim Stark, Harold Mussman, Pat Mussman, Tom Williamson, Eldon Strong, Acy Wartsbaugh III, Jeff Veach, Bill McCombs, Dan Waldron, Danny Wilson, Carl Jarosak, Dan Murchek, David Fagan, Jeremy Rivas, David Cornett, Phil Roper, Ron Necco, Chris Pamphilis, Ed Maher, Bob Covault, Josephg Wehnzer, Nate Sanders, Eriberto Huizar, Tom Frailey, Mike Colson, Steven Benefield, David Ryder, David Lant, Chris Quaalci, Raymond Tolarek, Ed Liknden, Sandy Linden, Frank Rumiset, Jon Abegg, Ron Shimizu, Richard Gossett, David Kerbs, James Cochran, Mitch Gall, Brandon Lee, Jeremy Jarrette, Mark Del Rio, Adam Lacefield, Darrin Dedelow, Keith Benman, Bob Szany, Mike Hill, Paul Truth, Erik Smith, Mike Dougherty, Jeff Valles, Jeff Anderson, Joe Pisarski, Jeff Klisiak, Phillip Kuiper, Eric Denny, Rick Parker, Raymond Risner, Charles Tiskane, Pat Carlisle, Chet Naulls, Ted Gross, Darryl Vargo, Ron Kurmis, R. T. Purnell, Dan Meyer, Mike Watson, Jared O'Brien, John Sorensen, Eric Yuhasz, Ed Leonard, Val Gomez, Tom Lanham, Dave Flowers, Charlie Menn, Robin Johnston, Tom Powers, Jim Nowacki, Marc Poulos, Dan Fairchild, Louis Ketchum, Bill Tarrant, Curtis Kooy, Clif Springham, Michael Simms, Vincent Ryan, Kellee Atkinson, William Shipman, Brian Vernellis, Jonathan Hoyle, Nick Hiscox, April McCormack, Erik Kozuszek, Jason DeYoung, Dan Blankenship, Doug Strayer, Josh Klahn, Craig Dubord, Dakota Jenkins, Richard Jarich, Brnaden Ketchen, Thomas Brett, DeWayne Hutton, Ed Shelten, Craig Ingram, Kyle Rensburger, David Byers II, Denny Hutchens, Tom Keenan, Joe Tierney, Jr. Wayne DeGaaf, Merlin Armstrong, Thomas Silich, Thomas Dorsey, Shannon Jones, Randy Filo, Bob Zubrick, Steve Den Hartog, Julia Surber, Steve Mantra, John Markos II, David Arniss, Justin Mount, Dillon Felty, Butch Rose, Angie Fegaras, John (INDOT), Rafael Cortes, Jr. Don Parker, Christopher Pool, Jill Ritchey, William Hathaway.

Staff present included Ty Warner, David Hollenbeck, Steve Strains, Belinda Petroskey, Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Scott Weber, Jack Eskin, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Sarah Geinosky, Stephen Sostaric, Allen Hammond, Angie Hayes, Eman Ibrahim, Kathy Luther and Mary Thorne.

Dave Hollenbeck announced a change of appointments to the NIRPC commission of Craig Earley for the Town of Lowell and Tom Goralczyk for the Town of Merrillville.

Report of the Chair: Dave Uran welcomed Greg Sanchez, the interim Lake County Surveyor. Ty Warner presented a staff service award to Mitch Barloga recognizing his 10 years of service as a planner at NIRPC. Mitch Barloga has recently taken on duties as Transportation Planning Manager. Dave Uran announced the formation of the Nominating Committee for the 2014 Executive Board officers. Geof Benson representing Porter County, Tom McDermott representing Lake County, Richard Murphy representing La Porte County, Ty Warner NIRPC Executive Director and Dave Uran will serve on the committee. Contact Ty Warner if you wish to be considered as a candidate for the 2014 Executive Board. The nominations will be presented at the January 16 meeting and the committee will ask for ratification by the Commission. At the October meeting, Mac McCraven addressed a demand response issue for South Lake County Community Services, a NIRPC sub-recipient, regarding picking up and dropping off residents. The landowner and South Lake County Community Services executed a hold-harmless agreement so that residents can be picked up and dropped off near or at their residence. Allen Hammond reported that the sub-recipient had problems with the entrance gates at the complex not functioning properly causing damage to both the gate and the vehicle, and residents had to board and de-board outside of the gates during a one week period. One of the owners of the complex apologized to South Lake County Community Services and provided them with an indemnification agreement. The transit operator has now resumed boarding and de-boarding within the complex. South Lake County Community Services was not out of compliance with federal regulations. Bob Carnahan, South Lake County Community Services board member, was pleased with the resolution of this matter.

The minutes of the October 17, 2013 meeting were approved on a motion by Stan Dobosz and a second by Kevin Breitzke.

Finance & Personnel Committee: Blair Milo reported on the Finance & Personnel Committee meeting held on December 12 and said the 2014 budget consisted of changes in funding and revenue, with a \$280,000 cut in funding. She referenced the General Fund Expense Budget for 2014, showing decreases in salaries, benefits, occupancy costs, departmental costs in environmental programs and promotions and contractual items. There are a number of environmental grants which are being pursued which will offset those cuts. Blair Milo motioned to adopt Resolution 13-24, 2014 Appropriation Budget; seconded by Jim Ton. Motion carried. Blair Milo reported on the five procurement recommendations for vehicle replacements, transit scheduling system, sub-recipient computer replacements and NIRPC electronics and software. Blair Milo motioned to adopt the procurement recommendations; seconded by Christine Cid. Motion carried. Blair Milo reported on the software license and service agreement between RouteMatch Software Inc. and NIRPC as Licensee with the beneficiaries being South Lake County Community Services, North Township Dial-a-Ride and Porter County Aging & Community Services. Blair Milo motioned to approve; seconded by Nancy Adams. Motion carried. Blair Milo motioned to approve an amendment to the contract between NIRPC and Conservation Design Forum Inc. for technical support services to extend the contract to March 30, 2014 at an additional cost not to exceed \$31,960; seconded by Jim Simmons. Motion carried.

Environmental Management Policy Committee: Kevin Breitzke reported that the Environmental Management Policy Committee discussed the Illiana and I-65 widening at their meeting on December 5. The consensus of the

group was to provide the following statement and recommendation: “As there are uncertainties about the environmental impacts of the proposed Illiana project which may be addressed or resolved through the remainder of the Environmental Impact Statement and permitting process, the EMPC requests to be a recognized stakeholder entity to allow members to actively participate and comment in all environmental reviews. The EMPC willingly commits to be actively engaged in every state environmental permitting process that must occur should this project be approved.”

Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee: Michael Griffin reported that the *Pathway to 2040* Implementation Committee convened a special meeting on December 4 to hear presentations by INDOT and NIRPC staff and to consider the Illiana project in light of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP). Several motions were made but no consensus was reached on whether to recommend the project for adoption or to reach an alignment with the Comprehensive Plan. Tom McDermott asked how this committee could take a pass on this controversial issue. Tom McDermott made a motion to delay the vote on the Illiana and pass it back to the 2040 Committee for their position; Roosevelt Allen Jr. seconded. Dave Uran opened the matter for discussion. Tom McDermott said this Board should not go forward until it knows what happened at the Pathway Committee level. Michael Griffin responded that the committee made several attempts to try to attain a majority. The neutrality issues in the analyses left the committee unable to reach a consensus. Staff did an excellent job of giving a professional report. He indicated the committee will undertake any instructions given to them by the Board. Brian Snedecor commented that there was no board member here today that did not thoroughly weigh all the information provided both for and against the projects with regard to the vote today. He indicated that the Transportation Policy Committee strongly endorsed supporting these projects to the board for a vote today and it is the Commission’s responsibility to move forward with a vote today. Jon Costas agreed, saying this issue has been discussed for years and encouraged a vote against the motion. Robert Carnahan said action should be taken today as the membership of the commission may change next year. Craig Early said a vote can’t be taken unless all the information is received.

Jim Ton said he was at the Pathway meeting as a Commissioner and member of the 2040 Plan Committee. The *Pathway to 2040* Committee discussed all the issues; there were some ambiguities and the committee could not come to a majority decision on any of the motions made. When the 2040 Plan was created, the Illiana was a conceptual project and did not have a lot of facts. When staff did their analysis, they could not always show matching points with the 2040 Plan because of the conceptuality of the Illiana at the time the 2040 Plan was written. Jim Ton said the committee members all agreed to disagree and that was its decision. To determine that the committee has to meet again is a waste of time and this board should not delay a vote today.

Ed Soliday said the motion made by Tom McDermott brings to the point that NIRPC is the only metropolitan planning organization (MPO) in the state that has its entire by-laws in state statute. In order to change NIRPC’s by-laws, 150 people (the General Assembly) have to vote on it, 100 of whom have probably never been in Northwest Indiana. The by-laws do not require that this board base any decision upon NIRPC’s committees nor does it give any clarity as to who should be on those committees. Delaying this vote could raise the cost in the price of the project and diminish bidder confidence. NIRPC is the only MPO that has in state statute what year census must be used in weighted voting. A bill to change that was killed three years ago but needs to be fixed. Tom McDermott said a one or two month delay is the least we can give to someone who is about to lose their home.

James Snyder questioned whether anything more could have been given to the committee that would have helped make a decision. Michael Griffin responded that staff practiced the very finest planning science they could and the committee was given as much information as was available. Further deliberation would probably not produce a result and delay may not be productive. Geof Benson said he was present at the 2040 Committee meeting and three unsuccessful motions were made. Dave Uran commented that this project is not typical and

is different than the norm. Ty Warner added that the uncertainties in the staff analysis were not due to a lack of information, but rather the stage of the project and the unknowns at this point in its development. INDOT has provided as much information as it had. Dave Uran reiterated the motion made by Tom McDermott was to delay the vote and pass it back to the 2040 Committee for a position which was seconded by Roosevelt Allen, Jr. On a voice vote, the majority of the Commission voted to defeat the motion to delay the vote and send it back to the *Pathway to 2040* Committee and instead to bring it up for a vote today.

Transportation Policy Committee: Jim Polarek, Vice Chair reported on the Transportation Policy Committee meeting held on December 3. Gary Evers explained Resolution 13-25, Amendment #5 to the FY2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) adding two air quality exempt projects for Lake County, one for Lowell and one for Porter County. Jim Polarek motioned to approve Resolution 13-25, seconded by Stan Dobosz. Motion carried. Mitch Barloga described the criteria and process to put a major project such as the Illiana into the plan. Staff analyzed the goals and objectives in the CRP and established categories of consistent, inconsistent, mixed, uncertain and neutral. Staff offered no recommendation to approve or disapprove, but rather offered recommendations, should the project be approved, such as building a trail along the full length of the expressway, limiting greenfield development, incorporating environmental practices and maintaining water accessibility.

Stephen Sostaric reported on the Public Comment Summary Report from the period October 14, 2013 to November 20, 2013. Four public meetings were held throughout the NIRPC region. Over 700 comments were received. All comments and the report can be found on the NIRPC website, the link to which was given to each Commissioner.

Jim Earl of INDOT gave a brief summary of their findings including fiscal constraint. The more negative findings were concentrated in the environmental areas, with most findings showing consistent or neutral ratings on over half of the 2040 CRP goals analyzed. The total investment of state highway funds and federal highway funds is \$80-\$110 million. For the period 2018-2053, net total revenues are projected to exceed the total project costs. Hearings on the projects will be held in January 2014.

Scott Weber described the findings of the air quality conformity determination with regard to the I-65 widening and the Illiana Expressway. The Inter-Agency Consultation Group which includes NIRPC, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, INDOT, US Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration compiled the determination and it was available for public comment and was posted on the NIRPC website. Differences between the base analysis and build analysis were shown and both projects are well within the State Implementation Plan air emissions budgets. The Transportation Policy Committee voted at their meeting on December 3 to recommend the Air Quality Conformity Determination to the Commission for adoption. Jim Polarek motioned to approve Resolution 13-26 making the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the amended 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan and amended FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program; Kevin Breitzke seconded. Tom McDermott said the I-65 expansion is a separate project from the Illiana and should be voted on separately. Joyce Newland, Federal Highway Administration – Indiana, commented that I-65 project has been around since last December. Another model would have to be run if they were separated. Dave Uran added that I-65 expansion is needed and is the first step in a continuation of the expansion further south. Tom McDermott said access to the Gary Airport would have been helped by the replacement of the Cline Avenue Bridge which held more traffic than the Illiana will have. Bob Alderman commented that the project clearly fits the 2040 Plan as it addresses issues of congestion, safety, economic development and jobs. Between 2007 and 2012, INDOT has spent \$428 million in Lake County. Everything must be done do have a modern, safe and efficient transportation system.

Roosevelt Allen, Jr. commented that truck stops and repair facilities along the Borman may lose some business and the project may contribute to sprawl. There should be concern about Indiana's economy instead of Illinois'. There is also concern about a guaranteed payment to concessionaires even if there is a shortfall in tolls which would put a burden on Indiana taxpayers. Ed Soliday commented that there will be more truck traffic in future years. The Panama Canal has been widened. Norfolk & Southern and CSX have spent over \$1 billion preparing for it. There will be more, longer and taller trains and truck traffic on I-80/94 increasing by at least 50% and in spite of the expansion it has an F rating, the lowest, for congestion. 53% of the truck traffic does not stop in Chicago or Indiana. The Illiana is about trucks not about an airport. The larger truck companies will pay tolls in order to avoid delays caused by congestion. Ed Soliday read a letter from the Indiana Motor Truck Association supporting the Illiana.

Christine Cid commented that the priority should be congestion and safety of our local roads. Because the Cline Avenue Bridge was not rebuilt, there are very heavy trucks on our local roads, more congestion and a lack of safety and air quality in our neighborhoods. East Chicago and Gary have lost revenue because of the loss of the Cline Avenue Bridge. Our local roads were not built to withstand heavy truck traffic. Robert Carnahan agreed that the Cline Avenue Bridge should have been rebuilt and added that there is and will be congestion on the Borman which can be reduced by building the Illiana. Dave Uran reiterated that the vote is on the air quality conformity analysis and a motion and second are on the floor. James Snyder called for the question. Tom McDermott and Roosevelt Allen, Jr. called for weighted vote using 2010 census figures. Dave Hollenbeck said the enabling legislation specifies the use of 2000 census population figures in a weighted vote. He reminded the Commission that there must be more than 50% of the vote in favor in order to pass. Mary Thorne called the roll for the weighted vote. On a weighted vote of 76.97 for and 20.43 against, the Commission approved Resolution 13-26, the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan and the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

Jim Polarek moved to recommend Resolution 13-27, Amendment #3 to include the Illiana Expressway and I-65 Added Travel Lanes projects to the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan; seconded by James Snyder. Tom McDermott moved to propose an amendment to the aforementioned motion which would separate the Illiana project from the I-65 Added Travel Lanes projects. His motion was rejected by Jim Polarek and James Snyder.

Karen Freeman-Wilson commented that she has reviewed all correspondence and information she received on the projects and contemplated on what it means to the tri-state region of Northwest Indiana, the Chicago Metropolitan area of Illinois and Southeast Wisconsin. She indicated her support of the projects, saying that Gary citizens will be the short and long term beneficiaries of a stronger region. James Snyder commented that looking to the future can be difficult but the vision of this expansion will enable our communities to enjoy good economic benefit and alleviated congestion on I-80/94. Dave Decker commented that the Illiana is a start and he supports this project extending into LaPorte County to the CSX site. An estimated 500-800 buildings being put up in the next five years with about 100 trucks per week going out of the CSX intermodal facility. The expressway is needed to keep trucks off local roads. Craig Earley said this project impacts about 20,000 people in three townships around Lowell and benefits everyone else. The increase in traffic will increase accidents, and directly impact local voluntary fire departments and ambulance service. The project benefit appears to be to the rest of the region, not the citizens of the three townships it will impact. Robert Carnahan said 5 of 7 members of the Cedar Lake Town Council selected the same route that is proposed. Jon Costas said this body should support this opportunity to relieve congestion. Roosevelt Allen Jr. commented that Northwest Indiana is becoming the trucking hub of the country. It is counter-productive to redirect traffic away from the northern core. Geof Benson commented that an expansion of the South Shore to Lowell and then to Valparaiso at a cost of about \$1 billion with the local match being similar to that for the Illiana would also relieve congestion, and felt taxpayers should have a say in how the state is spending their tax money. Ed Soliday reiterated that the companies moving their product in North County would not be impeded by the 53% of the non-stop truck traffic

on the Illiana. A Peotone airport will not be helped in any way by the building of the Illiana. The Gary Airport is an excellent opportunity for a reliever airport as it is only 30 minutes from downtown Chicago. Dave Shafer commented that the only way to get the answers people are seeking is by voting the Illiana into the 2040 Plan. Dave Uran commented that Governor Pence wants to push tax relief for business owners and raise the local option income tax. How can local communities collect money to pay for amenities without jobs? This is a blue collar region and people rely on jobs to take care of their families. In Crown Point, I-65 is an amenity and there is a direct benefit derived from the 109th Avenue interchange. Dave Uran asked the Commission to vote on the merits of the projects only. Geof Benson moved for a weighted vote; seconded by Roosevelt Allen, Jr. Mary Thorne called the roll for the weighted vote. On a weighted vote of 76.22 for and 20.33 against, the Commission approved Resolution 13-27, Amendment #3 to include the Illiana Expressway and I-65 added travel lanes projects to the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan.

Gary Evers presented on Resolution 13-28, Amendment #4 to add the Illiana Expressway and I-65 Added Travel Lanes projects to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program for a total Indiana project cost of \$300,000,000. Jim Polarek moved to approve Resolution 13-28, Amendment #4 with an added paragraph that reads, "Whereas the projects were subjected to NIRPC's Congestion Management Process analysis and were found to be consistent." Kevin Breitzke seconded. In answer to a question by Anthony Copeland, Gary Evers said the projects are added as a phase in the short-term four-year spending program and this amendment only goes through 2017. The amendment was approved on a majority voice vote.

Michael Griffin said he has heard compelling argument about sustaining emergency services on the toll road and as there is private funding involved there should be an attempt to recover expenses incurred in providing public safety. Michael Griffin motioned that there be a sense of the Commission to urge any negotiating authority including the Governor to include in any lease construction agreement in lieu of taxes and/or direct reimbursement for public safety services provided by the neighboring communities of the toll road; seconded by Robert Carnahan. James Snyder suggested adding existing circumstances as well and suggested the issue be tabled to the January meeting to think about the matter. Michael Griffin will prepare in writing a policy, file it with the Executive Director and the Chair and bring it to the January meeting. Ed Soliday asked to give it some thought as well, as traffic change concepts could affect the whole state. Pros and cons need to be vetted. Michael Griffin withdrew his motion; Robert Carnahan withdrew his second. Chairman Uran called for a 10 minute recess at noon.

The meeting resumed at 12:10 p.m. Dave Hollenbeck reported for the record that the outcome of the two weighted votes that were taken were would have been the same regardless of which census figures were used. On Resolution 13-26 the vote was 76.97% in favor and 20.43% oppose. There were 30 votes favorably cast with a majority of 27 needed to take action and 9 votes against. Had the 2010 census figures been used, the vote would have been 76.14 in favor with 20.5 opposed. With regard to Resolution 13-27, 76.22% were in favor of the action and 20.33 votes were opposed. There were 29 favorable votes cast, with 8 opposed. Using the 2010 census figures, the outcome would have been 75.51% in favor, 20.3% opposed. With either census, the voting outcome would have been the same. In answer to a question by Christine Cid, Ty Warner explained that the absent votes were not recorded as nays but the protocol effect of an absence or abstention was the same as a nay. State statute says you must have more than 50 in a weighted vote; we have a total of 100.

Legislative Committee: Tom McDermott reported on the Legislative Committee meeting on October 18, agenda and minutes attached. Three resolutions were presented to the commission. Resolution 13-29 is a resolution of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission in support of the reauthorization of the Regional Development Authority (RDA) whose \$100 million 10 year charter expires in 2015. Geof Benson motioned to approve Resolution 13-29; Nancy Adams seconded. Discussion followed. Kevin Breitzke said the original agreement to support the RDA called for \$3.5 million from East Chicago, Gary, Hammond, Lake and Porter

Counties and up to \$10 million from the Indiana Toll Road proceeds and asked if future funding has been addressed. Tom McDermott responded that if the terms of the agreement change, we would revisit the issue. If there are similar funds and participants, we could support it. Jon Costas added that the RDA did a lot for the communities being the execution arm for regional success and we should support it. Jim Murphy thanked the RDA for granting a challenge grant to the Town of Kouts for extended sewer lines. Karen Freeman Wilson thanked the RDA for their partnership with the Gary Airport, the Marquette Park redevelopment and helped with efforts to tear down the Sheraton Hotel. Ed Soliday thanked the RDA for its work. We need to regrow our middle class and we need a regional entity with a funding source to help get things done. We need transit-oriented development and we must work regionally. David Uran called for a voice vote; motion carried.

Tom McDermott introduced Resolution 13-30, which is about the expansion of commuter rail between Northwest Indiana and Chicago. He said Resolution 13-30 is supportive of the West Lake Corridor and increased investment in the region. On a motion by Tom McDermott, second by Nancy Adams, Resolution 13-30 was approved with one abstention.

Tom McDermott said Resolution 13-31 supports the development of a NIRPC task force to analyze the composition of the NICTD board. This was also in summer study by a committee of the General Assembly. There was strong feeling on both sides of the issue in the Legislative Committee meeting. Ed Soliday said NIRPC is a great asset for Northwest Indiana and a great deal of money from Chicago comes here. He said if this motion passes, he would not entertain any bills which modify the NICTD board membership until we have a recommendation from NIRPC. Assurances came from Ty Warner and Tom McDermott that the task force would work closely with St. Joseph County and MACOG. Tom McDermott thanked Ed Soliday for his work on this and motioned to approve Resolution 13-31 in support of the West Lake Corridor and increased investment in the region; seconded by Bob Schaefer. The motion carried with one abstention.

Tom McDermott concluded his report, thanking Mary Thorne for her work with the Legislative Committee.

Northwest Indiana Economic Development District: Roosevelt Allen, Jr. reported that the Northwest Indiana Economic Development District (NWIEDD) continues to maintain the Comprehensive Development Strategy (CEDS). There has not been a lot of activity due to the apprehension that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) has as far as Congress is concerned. Some housekeeping has been done as required by the EDA. We have prepared and distributed a resolution to the Commissioners of the three counties. The Lake County Commissioners are acting on it on December 18. It is hoped that the other county Commissioners will act on it during December and then get the information back to the EDA as required.

Indiana Department of Transportation: Bob Alderman, thanked the Commission for their support of the region and extended good wishes for the holidays. He said there will be some new opportunities in the New Year.

Other Business:

The Department of Natural Resources is looking to add five positions to their state board in trails and bike paths next year. Dave Uran would like for Mitch Barloga be considered for one of those five positions. He encouraged the Commissioners to submit their own separate letter in support of Mitch. Dave Uran motioned to have NIRPC write a letter of support of Mitch Barloga; Jim Ton seconded. Motion carried.

Robert Carnahan thanked Karen Freeman Wilson and Michael Griffin for being two of the judges in the Town of Cedar Lake's Parade of Lights.

Public Comment:

- Jim Nowacki, Gary commented that he did not think we got a good value from the Regional Development Authority. He said that the RDA had been double-billed by Gary Airport Authority by \$10 million and asked that we get good accounting. The RDA invested \$28 million in Marquette Park but he feels that it is still inaccessible to the residents of Gary and there is little or no maintenance of the park. Gary spent \$750,000 on removing asbestos from the Sheraton Hotel and now they are spending \$1.75 million to tear it down and the RDA is contributing \$200,000.
- Bill Hathaway, Lowell, thanked Karen Freeman Wilson for her statement but expressed disappointment with her vote. He objected to some of the sales pitches made by INDOT and said the numbers changed constantly. NIRPC staff numbers differed from INDOT's numbers. Part of the problem with the Pathway Committee's indecision was due to the differing models and outdated data and he urged NIRPC to spend money on upgraded technology. NIRPC's public comment meetings were adequate, however, the format should allow for discussion between the public and staff.

Ed Soliday responded that the disagreement in studies is that federal government mandates that the state use market-based studies which look at the past and project trends based on what was done previously. The 2040 Plan envisions growth in the North County. A state projection is a statement of trend. North County won't grow unless we do something different than what we are currently doing and we need to know what we need to do to get there. Ty Warner added that this was a huge issue throughout the process. This Commission made a policy statement using the forecasts. Robert Carnahan added that in the 2000 census, Lake County lost population and one Congressman. In 2010 we stayed the same. We need to grow but through good planning.

Dave Uran closed the public comment.

Report of the Executive Director: Ty Warner thanked the Commission for staying at the table and reviewing all the materials during this challenging process. He thanked staff for their hard work with this project and the staff paper. Ty Warner said NIRPC is committed to working with those communities that may be impacted if this project goes forward as shown through the release of the Livable Centers process and transit oriented development. NICTD adopted a resolution regarding transit-oriented development which was forwarded to the Commission on behalf of Christine Cid. Ty Warner thanked Dave Uran for his commitment to the Commission and his chairmanship through the year and expressed his best wishes for a happy holiday.

Dave Uran thanked the Commission saying it's been an interesting year adding that the region as a whole will be stronger going into 2014. He extended good wishes for the holiday.

On a motion by Brian Snedecor and a second by Diane Noll, Dave Uran adjourned the meeting at 1:45 p.m.