

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

March 17, 2015

MINUTES

Members Present

Stan Dobosz, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Dave Decker, Joe Simonetto, Richard Ludlow, Jamal Washington, Rick Heimann, Matt Deitchley, La’Kisha Girder, David Wright, Joe Crnkovich, Deb Backhus, Bruce Spires, Taylor Wegrzyn, Don Parker, Tom MacLennan, Mike Yacullo, Mark O’Dell, Tom VanderWoude, Mitch Bishop, Robin Tillman, Bruce Lindner, Phil Gralik and Craig Phillips.

Guests

Lyndsay Quist, Joe Rurode, Bob Carnahan, Kay Nelson, Mary Jane Thomas, Rebecca “Sis” Williams, George Rogge, Ismail Attallah, Jake Dammarell, Joe Wszolek, James Mandon, Christopher Murphy, Ron Wiedeman, Mark Pittman, Peter Kohut, Dennis Cobb, Carole Carlson and Keith Benman.

NIRPC Staff

Scott Weber, Gabrielle Biciunas, Mitch Barloga, Sarah Geinosky, Gary Evers, Stephen Sostaric and Mary Thorne.

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- a) Vice-Chairman Stan Dobosz called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- b) The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- c) On a motion by Don Parker and a second by Bruce Lindner, the minutes of the February 10, 2015 meeting were approved as submitted.

2. Presentations –

The Ports of Indiana

Rick Heimann, Port Director presented an overview of the economic impacts of the Ports of Indiana at Burns Harbor, which has been self-sufficient since 2005. The port has 600 acres of land, 30 tenant companies and 85 acres of available land. With 10+ steel companies and 3 steel mills, the port is a one-stop shop for steel processing. Rail is served by Norfolk Southern and Indiana Harbor Belt. The Port has Foreign-Trade Zone status, 24-hour security and an onsite healthcare facility. There is a public access dock for fisherman. The Port connects to the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico. The port serves ships, barges, trucks, rail cars and laker ore vessels. 2014 was a record year for tonnage, 30% over that of 2013. The Port received shipment of the world’s largest crawler crane in 190 pieces for the BP Refinery. 5% of raw steel is exported; 95% is imported and finished into coil here. Rick Heimann extended an offer of a tour of the Port to members of the TPC and Commission. For more information, visit the website at <http://www.portsofindiana.com/default.cfm>. Contact Rick Heimann at 219-787-8636.

3. Planning

- a) 2040 CRP Update – Mitch Barloga reported that the draft update is in the public comment process until mid-April. Recommendation of the draft plan by the *Pathway to 2040* Implementation Committee would take place at their meeting on April 30, followed by recommendations by the Environmental Management Policy Committee and Transportation Policy Committee at their May meetings with final adoption by the NIRPC full Commission at their meeting in May.

- b) Air Quality Conformity Determination Update – Scott Weber briefed the committee on the Conformity Analysis update. INDOT has made a big push toward updating the inputs into our conformity model, taking into account new data from vehicle registrations and new emissions rates for profiles of fuel types. Staff has only seen two cases which caused a small spike in emissions in the early years of the plan. We will put out a concurrent air neutral plan which will satisfy the public review component.
- c) Public Comment Period – Stephen Sostaric referred to the notice in the packet of the public comment period. A meeting was held in Valparaiso and there is one today in Merrillville. Staff will be in Michigan City on Thursday and at IUN on Saturday. Comments may be submitted at the meetings, by email, phone, or postal mail.
- d) Functional Classification System Update – Sarah Geinosky said the update is almost finished. A meeting with INDOT and FHWA went well. Some changes were made. A final meeting will be held on Tuesday with INDOT and FHWA at 10 a.m. and any questions you may have will be answered then. If all goes well, it will be up for adoption in April.

4. Programming

- a) Gary Evers reported on the results of the Notice of Funding Availability. The listing will be posted to our website for your review. There is a large volume of CMAQ in Lake and Porter counties. HSIP came a little over available funding. STP Group II in the Michigan City urbanized area is oversubscribed. No CMAQ funds are available until SFY 2017 in Lake and Porter only and only \$1.2 million is estimated. Staff will meet with the LaPorte County stakeholders within the next 30 days to pare down their list of projects. Ped, Pedal & Paddle has something scheduled to look at as will the transit operators in Lake and Porter. The highway group will convene in summer on CMAQ highway projects. EMPC met to review projects and suggested Lake and Porter County funding to be divided among the four modes evenly at 25%. A number of ineligible and duplicative projects were submitted under CMAQ and HSIP. This solicitation was to catch up on our spending plan. The earliest to turn in projects is July 25. Mitch Barloga added that the Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee will meet on March 26 and revisit bike and ped applications for the TAP program. Gary Evers said there are more projects submitted for TAP than there is funding available. The end of SFY 2015 is near and not all of the funding has been spent. All federal dollars must be zeroed out every year. There is no carryover under Livable Centers or HSIP. There will be no excuse for being late with PE. \$4.2 million will be obligated in Lake and Porter and \$1.5 million will be obligated in La Porte.

5. Indiana Department of Transportation

Lyndsay Quist reported on the lettings for February through May 2015.

6. Transit Operators Reports

- a) **LaPorte Transit** – Tom MacLennan reported that the Transit Triangle service started last month and there is positive reaction. Despite the winter weather slowdown, ridership continues to grow.
- b) **Valparaiso V-Line and Chicago DASH** – No report.
- c) **East Chicago Transit** – No report.
- d) **GPTC** – David Wright reported that February ridership numbers should hold steady over February of 2014 for an 18% increase overall over the previous year due to the weather. Staff attended Indiana Transit Association and Indiana Citizens for Transit's *Transit Day* at the Statehouse. There was a lot of interest in Northwest Indiana. GPTC is tracking HB 1001, which provides a very modest increase in PMTF funds. SB 478 is currently GPTC-specific and would allow the GPTC to access TIF funds for transit.
- e) **Michigan City Transit** – No report.
- f) **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that February ridership was up 8/10 of 1% but is still up 2.7% over February of 2014. It is picking up in March. A new timetable with schedule changes was issued, including the Sunrise Express which gets into Chicago in 1 hour and 55 minutes. A two-week project begins on April

6 to replace the stairway at the East Chicago station before it becomes a structural problem. A temporary stairway will be set up but the elevator will still be in service. Contracts are out for platform repair at two of the three platforms at Millennium Station. Other work is being done. The overhead wire project east of La Porte County 300W is ongoing. Other projects will resume with warmer weather.

- g) **North Township Dial-A-Ride** – No report.
- h) **Opportunity Enterprises** – No report.
- i) **Porter County Council on Aging and Community Services** – Bruce Lindner thanked Valparaiso for the use of their old bus barn.
- j) **South Lake County Community Services** – No report.

7. Regional Transportation Partners

- a) **South Shore Trails** – Don Parker reported that they have an application in for a contact point for the American Bike Challenge for 2015 and another application to fund a workshop on bringing together an intersection between transportation planning and health. Your spring trail events will be promoted on their Facebook page and website. Visit www.southshoretrails.org.
- b) **Indiana Toll Road** – Roosevelt Allen, Jr. and Dave Decker reported on a meeting they attended in New York last month with the Special Creditors Committee, their financial underwriters and their law firms, but had not been given an opportunity to prepare a final bid on the Indiana Toll Road. IFM Investors, of Australia, announced they had entered into a definitive purchase and sale agreement for the Toll Road with a \$5.72 billion bid on March 11. They have until September to come up with the financing.

8. **Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration** – No reports were given.

9. **Planning Neighbors** – No reports were given.

10. **Public Comment on Agenda Items** – None.

11. Other Business, Staff Announcements and Upcoming Meetings

- a) **Other Business** – None.
- b) **Announcements** – None.
- c) **Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC** – The Land Use Committee will meet on March 18 at 10 a.m. at NIRPC. The Finance & Personnel Committee will meet on March 19 at 8 a.m. at NIRPC. The Executive Board will meet on March 19 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC. The *Pathway to 2040* Implementation Committee will meet on March 25 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC. The Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee will meet on March 26 at 1:30 p.m. at NIRPC. The Environmental Policy committee will meet on April 2 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 14 at NIRPC.

On a motion by Don Parker and a second by Joe Simonetto, Stan Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 10:30 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.

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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