

NIRPC Executive Board/Full Commission Meeting  
NIRPC/Forum Building, Portage, IN  
Public Meeting  
May 23, 2013  
Minutes

The Executive Session was held at 9:00 a.m. to discuss the NIRPC building lease.

**Call to Order:** Chairman Dave Uran called the public meeting to order at noon with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners present for the Executive Session included Nancy Adams, John Bayler, Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Tom Clouser, Anthony Copeland, Dave Decker, Don Ensign, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Jeff Freeze, Rosalie Jacobs, Tom McDermott, Blair Milo, Rich Mrozinski, Diane Noll, Anthony Pampalone, Jim Polarek, Mark Ritter, Bob Schaefer, Tom Schmitt, Dave Shafer, James Snyder, Ed Soliday, Greg Stinson, James Ton, Dave Uran and George VanTil. For the public meeting, there was a quorum for an Executive Board meeting.

Others present included Keith Benman, Carole Carlson, Dan Gardner, La’Kisha Girder, Val Gomez, James Hunter, Renae, Carol Kuznicki, Shannan Lefever, Jim Nowacki, Shirley Patrick, Leonard Sullivan, John Teer, Teresa Torres, Rudy Velasco, Rebecca “Sis” Williams and David Wright.

Staff present included Ty Warner, David Hollenbeck, Angie Hayes, Eman Ibrahim, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, Bill Brown, and Mary Thorne.

In response to a question by one of the attendees, Portage Mayor James Snyder said he calls for police presence as a precautionary measure whenever individuals carrying signs attend meetings in Portage.

**Public Participation Plan:** Chairman Uran began the agenda with the Transportation Policy Committee report on the update of the Public Participation Plan. Before staff could give a presentation about the plan and the process to develop it, Commissioner Anthony Copeland moved to table any action on the plan, having received several comments from some members of the public that the NIRPC Board had not yet seen. Nancy Adams seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Commissioner Copeland stated that the board may have already addressed some of the concerns in those comments. The commissioners received a letter during the meeting from Roy Dominguez, a member of the board of Everybody Counts, which will become part of the public record of the meeting. The commissioners previously received an earlier draft of the Public Participation Plan. The latest version, the May 15 draft, was posted on the NIRPC website as part of the meeting materials and a link to the website was also emailed to the commission. Mayor Copeland stated that he had not seen that more recent draft of the plan. Ms. Torres requested a meeting with members of the NIRPC commission to review the concerns of Everybody Counts. Responding to her request, Mayor Freeman-Wilson expressed interest in serving on an ad-hoc committee to be appointed by the NIRPC Chair and tasked to meet with this group. Chairman Uran said a special public meeting of the Executive Board will be called within the next month specifically on the Public Participation Plan, to further review the plan and address these concerns before a vote is taken. The date, time and location will be announced through normal channels once they have been set. Mayor Uran asked that anyone wishing to be notified of the information regarding

the meeting with the commissioners on the public participation plan give their contact information to appropriate NIRPC staff. The Executive Board voted unanimously to table the action on the plan.

**Report of the Chair:** Chairman Uran welcomed Ed Soliday as the Governor's recent appointment to the commission, replacing Chet Dobis.

**Approval of Minutes:** On a motion by Nancy Adams and a second by Dave Decker, the minutes of the April 18<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meeting were approved.

**Finance & Personnel Committee:**

Committee Chair Blair Milo reported that the Finance & Personnel Committee met on May 8 to review five responses to the RFP for office space lease and selected three sites based on defined criteria for consideration. Representatives of those three sites presented to the Full Commission Executive Session this morning. The Finance & Personnel Committee assemble the information from the three site presentations and send it to the Commission. The Finance & Personnel Committee will meet in special session to formulate a recommendation to an Executive Session of the June Full Commission prior to the June public meeting of the Commission to move forward on a decision on the building lease.

**Environmental Management Policy Committee:** Kevin Breitzke reported that the draft minutes were supplied in the materials. The next meeting is June 6 at 9 a.m.

**Transportation Policy Committee:** Bill Brown reported that the committee met on May 14, and has three actions for consideration. Belinda Petroskey described Amendment 28 to the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for both INDOT and LaPorte County CMAQ projects. On a motion by Jim Ton seconded by Nancy Adams, the Executive Board adopted Resolution 13-09 amending the FY 2012-2015 TIP. Belinda Petroskey described Resolution 13-10 Amendment 29 to the FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for an engineering project for NICTD. On a motion by Nancy Adams seconded by Jim Ton, the Executive Board adopted Resolution 13-10 amending the FY 2012-2015 TIP. Eman Ibrahim described the 2014 Unified Planning Work Program budget amendment necessary due to changes to the new federal transportation regulation, Map-21 and a 21% federal budget reduction in planning funds. She added that new NIRPC programs are added including the Marquette Plan update and STP planning which will offset the budget cut. On a motion by Dave Decker seconded by Anthony Copeland, the Executive Board voted to adopt Resolution 13-11 Amendment to the FY 2014 budget.

**Legislative Committee:** Tom McDermott asked that anyone interested in being on the committee for 2014 should contact him. Ed Soliday will serve on the committee.

**INDOT:** Chairman Uran said that Robert Alderman was unable to attend the public meeting, but Mr. Alderman asked that the commissioners feel free to contact him with any questions regarding INDOT projects.

**Other Business:** None.

**Public Comment:** Rudy Velasko, East Chicago, asked that commissioners speak loudly to enable those with hearing disabilities to understand what they are saying. Len Sullivan expressed his opposition to the term "protester." Tom McDermott read the definition of "protester." Jim Nowacki, Gary, commented on dips in the roadway, curb height and sidewalk issues regarding the repaving of US 12/20

in Gary. Renae, Lake County, commented that signage held by the public constitutes written requests and commented that several commissioners had to leave prior to the public meeting and were unable to hear her comments. Teresa Torres commented that she has asked that people speak loudly. She stated that the signage was so that the public could express their concerns and be “heard” before the public comment section later in the agenda when some of the commissioners must leave for other appointments. Ms. Torres also stated she received a notice from the NIRPC consultant that the Public Participation Plan was to be voted on at 9:00 a.m. She read comments provided in writing to her by George Janiec who had to leave. Mr. Janiec asked that NIRPC remove comments in the Public Participation Plan which indicated he provided public comment. These comments were taken from a written document which he states was part of legal negotiation. Both Mr. Janiec and Ms. Jackson who is here specifically put in writing “do not use our names to endorse this product or the method by which it was developed.” Ms. Torres stated that Mr. Janiec said that in the current plan, there are comments ascribed to him which are a complete distortion of his actual remarks.

**Announcements:**

- Dave Shafer announced the clerk-treasurers’ statewide conference June 9-13, noting their absence at any of NIRPC’s meetings during those dates.
- Dave Shafer also said the NARC Conference from June 23-27 may also conflict with any NIRPC meetings.

**Report of the Executive Director:** Ty Warner thanked the Finance & Personnel Committee for their work on the NIRPC building lease RFP responses.

**Adjournment:** On a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Blair Milo, Chairman Uran adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.