

NIRPC Full Commission Meeting
NIRPC/Forum Building, Portage, IN
September 18, 2014
Minutes

Chairman Brian Snedecor called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions. There was a quorum for a meeting of the full Commission.

Commissioners present included Nancy Adams, Allen Roosevelt, Jr., Geof Benson, Kevin Breitzke, Tom Clouser, Anthony Copeland, Jon Costas, Dave Decker, Stan Dobosz, Bill Emerson, Jr., Don Ensign, Karen Freeman-Wilson, Richard Ludlow, Tom McDermott, Blair Milo, Rich Murphy, Randy Niemeyer, Diane Noll, Lori Reno, Bob Schaefer, Tom Schmitt, Joe Simonetto, Brian Snedecor, Ed Soliday, Ron Stallings, Greg Stinson and Jim Ton.

Others present included Rosemary Bell, Alan Bell, Robert Alderman, Val Gomez, Justin Mount, Ben Falkowski, Bob Carnahan, Deb Backhus, Ray Dumbrys, David Wright, Renae Jackson, Teresa Torres, Jim Nowacki, and LuAnn Franklin.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Angie Hayes, Kathy Luther, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Scott Weber, Jack Eskin, Sarah Geinosky, Gabrielle Biciunas and Mary Thorne.

Presentation: The Commission heard a presentation by Beverly Shores residents Rosemary and Alan Bell on successful efforts to curb light pollution in Beverly Shores by retrofitting the light fixtures with downward-facing shields to direct light toward the ground, thereby reducing glare. The move is easier on aging eyes and improves safety by providing clearer visibility in dark areas. 60 residents in Beverly Shores provided the \$10,000 to retrofit the lights. The town was able to eliminate 13 street lights and replace the remaining 48 with the shields. The Bells gave a demonstration of how the glare was reduced and showed a video clip from WGN news. The International Dark-Sky Association acclaimed Beverly Shores as the seventh community in the world to be recognized as an International Dark Sky Community.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the August 21, 2014 meeting were approved on a motion by Dave Decker and a second by Anthony Copeland.

Report of the Chair: No report was given.

Report of the Executive Director: Ty Warner reported on several items:

- The latest edition of the NIRPC newsletter was provided, featuring the update of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan as required by USDOT by mid-2015. The schedule of

meetings relative to the update is in the newsletter. The plan won seven awards and a reminder was given about the plan's video.

- A special invitation to the Indiana Logistics Summit was provided to the NIRPC Commission. The summit will be held in Indianapolis on October 7-8.
- The October meeting will need to be a meeting of the full Commission. A presentation on Regional Economic Development by Kelly Disser from NAI Hiffman, which is being facilitated with the help of the NWI Forum, will be featured.
- Ty Warner reported he attended the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) conference where Rebecca Ryan, Resident Futurist for the Alliance for Innovation, likened the economy to the seasons saying that the economy is currently in a "winter" season, but in winter, rather than things being dead, energy is actually being stored for the spring. Likewise, the economy is already showing signs of emerging positively.

Finance & Personnel Committee: Committee Chairman Jim Ton reported that the committee met this morning and received various information, updates and reports. There were no adverse issues. Three actions were recommended by the Committee this morning.

Budget amendment #6 in the amount of \$3,000 to contractual to add new funds to the 2014 budget for additional services relative to the October public transportation meeting. On a motion by Blair Milo and a second by Nancy Adams, the Commission approved Budget amendment #6.

The second action is the Kankakee River Basin Commission annual agreement approved by their board allowing them to reimburse NIRPC for salary and fringe benefit costs, office space, etc. On a motion by Nancy Adams and a second by Don Ensign, the Commission approved the annual agreement between NIRPC and Kankakee River Basin Commission.

The third item is for a basic agreement between NIRPC and Accufund Inc. of Boston, Massachusetts, as procured under RFP 14-05 for accounting software, training, security and support in the amount of \$77,000. On a motion by Bill Emerson, Jr. and a second by Nancy Adams, the Commission approved the agreement between NIRPC and Accufund, Inc.

Jim Ton reported that some discussions were held on the preliminary draft budget for 2015. The building improvement project plans are at a State office for review. Comcast should have all work done and services delivered by October 1.

Environmental Management Policy Committee: Committee Chairman Geof Benson said the draft minutes were available in the packet. Septic Awareness Week is September 22-26. The Committee meeting topic will address the 2040 Plan update.

Transportation Policy Committee: Vice Chairman Stan Dobosz said the committee heard a presentation by Gary Public Transportation Corp. on the Livable Broadway Corridor Plan at their meeting on September 9. Steve Strains announced the draft Public Participation Plan was released for public comment from September 15 to October 31. Gary Evers presented on

changes INDOT is making to the funding and programming of projects. Two actions were recommended for approval.

Gary Evers described Resolution 14-23 Amendment 24 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program for four INDOT projects or phases. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Rich Murphy, the Commission approved Resolution 14-23 Amendment 24 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

Gary Evers described Resolution 14-24 Amendment 25 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program for three NIRPC UPWP Planning Project for TIP and LPA project oversight and management, the inclusion of which was requested by Federal Highway Administration. On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a second by Jon Costas, the Commission approved Resolution 14-24 Amendment 25 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program.

Stan Dobosz said the next meeting of the Transportation Policy Committee will be on October 9.

Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee: Vice Chair Nancy Adams reported that the committee met on August 20 and heard a presentation on the Marquette Plan update based on suggestions from their previous meeting. The committee provided additional suggestions for inclusion in the Marquette Plan update. The next meeting of the Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee will be on October 8th. (Note: Pathway Committee Chairman Michael Griffin cancelled this meeting and rescheduled it for November 13.)

Northwestern Indiana Economic Development District: Roosevelt Allen, Jr. reported that the District (NWIEDD) met on September 15. Discussions were on the reduction of board members from 17 to 11, a change that was recently made in the bylaws of the NWIEDD. The private sector will handle their own reduction process. The formal accounting review was completed for 2012-2013 with no adverse findings. The district continues to work on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and the new update will be on the NWIEDD website. Regarding district status, Roosevelt Allen said they are waiting for the letter of support from Governor Pence and the Indiana economic director.

Indiana Department of Transportation: Bob Alderman reported that emergency repair contract work has made it to Lake and Porter counties. Salt went from \$68 to \$98 per ton, which will impact their budget. INDOT is still trying to replace former staff and also are gearing up for this winter. In answer to a question from Ed Soliday, Bob Alderman said the roadwork on US 30 is currently in the patchwork phase of repair, is understandably rough now, and will get a final, smooth coating. Ed Soliday commended INDOT for working on the road during the night when traffic is minimal. Bob Schaefer, Stan Dobosz, Roosevelt Allen and Nancy Adams voiced their appreciation for lights and road work done in their communities. Ed Soliday added that in the transportation summer study committee will meet on the 23rd, when INDOT and BMV will give an annual report, mostly financial, to educate the Legislature on the need for more funding. Ed Soliday also said that we were able to get a 40% overall increase in revenue but we still need \$1.6 billion more to replace or repair current infrastructure.

Other Business: Tom McDermott said the Legislative Committee will meet on October 3rd at 10:00 a.m. at NIRPC. Last year, the committee took a position on the South Shore Railroad expansion and the Illiana Toll Road which are moving forward. The next meeting will focus on reauthorizing the Regional Development Authority and regional public transportation in addition to any other state issues. Ed Soliday commented that the Legislature starts the second week of January but the last date to draft a bill is December 15. He said that NIRPC still has an antiquated code that bases weighted voting on the 2000 Census, which should be fixed this year, changing to the 2010 Census. Tom McDermott also suggested reworking the NIRPC by-laws as they are written into Indiana Code. Ed Soliday suggested drafting something sooner than the December 15 deadline.

Announcements:

- Robert Carnahan, Cedar Lake Town Councilman, commented that he lauded NIRPC's work at the IACT conference last week. He also announced that the Cedar Lake Chamber will again host the Parade of Lights on November 22 and he asked for three volunteers to judge the parade entries.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

- Jim Nowacki, Gary, commented that there was a need for more street lighting in Gary and suggested that Gary is held in lower regard than other communities for such services.

Robert Alderman responded that he has never treated any community as a lesser one. He said he has been totally committed to the Mayor and the City of Gary and that he will look into the lighting situation.

- Renae Jackson, Gary commented that no response was provided to a complaint by a Portage resident about not receiving a ride from Porter County Aging and Community Services. She commented that MPOs such as NIRPC should help commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act next year. Renae Jackson also commented on the upcoming NIRPC public meetings referred to in the newsletter and she felt NIRPC's mailing list was still in need of updates.

Ty Warner responded that the letter from Porter County Aging and Community Services sent to the Portage resident contained an apology, was to correct information and provide a resolution for the resident's transportation needs. With regard to the public meetings, Ty Warner responded that the meeting on October 29 was arranged in response to the settlement agreement with Everybody Counts.

- Teresa Torres, Everybody Counts, commented that the Portage resident was looking for a response from NIRPC with regard to its oversight. She commented that Everybody Counts asked for a series of meetings; NIRPC agreed to the October 29th date. Teresa Torres commented on the public comment period for the draft update of the Public Participation Plan regarding holding a public meeting.

Ty Warner responded that a series of public meetings on the Public Participation Plan have been held over the last two years. He added that the currently adopted Public Participation Plan of 2007 does not require a public meeting during the comment period. The draft Public Participation Plan would require one and NIRPC has scheduled a public meeting on October 28 to hear comments on the draft PPP.

Brian Snedecor reminded those present that the Executive Session would convene and the room must be cleared of everyone except the Commissioners. Hearing no other business, on a motion by Anthony Copeland and a second by Kevin Breitzke, Brian Snedecor 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. DVD recordings will be available once they are received by NIRPC from the videographer.

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.

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, familial status, parental status, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.