

## OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING

March 13, 2019

NIRPC Lake Michigan Room

Minutes

Justin Kiel called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self introductions. Attending were Justin Kiel, NIRPC Commissioner and owner and publisher of the Regional News and Westville Indicator; Kathy Sipple, ValpoNEXT; Kelly Anoe, Legacy Foundation; Heath Carter, Valparaiso Human Resource Council; Kelly Wenger, South Shore Line; Jodi Hawn; Everybody Counts; Katie Vallis, IDNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program and Terry Velligan, Cline Avenue Bridge Partners.

NIRPC staff included Kathy Luther, Chief of Staff and Director of Environmental Programs; Dominique Edwards, Outreach Coordinator, Charles Bradsky, Transportation Projects Manager; Scott Weber, Transportation Planner/Analyst; Peter Kimball, Regional Planner/Policy Analyst; and Mary Thorne, Administrative Assistant.

The INDOT meeting participation survey was available on the table in the lobby.

The minutes of the February 6 meeting were approved on a motion by Heath Carter and a second by Kathy Sipple.

Public Comment -

There were no comments from the public.

NIRPC Updates

Dominique Edwards reported that she attended NTI public involvement training which will help fill in gaps in the public participation process.

Kathy Luther recommended we apply for the Peer Exchange held through the Transportation Planning Capacity Building (TPCB) Program, which is jointly sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). This exchange would help us with the transportation planning process.

Scott Weber gave a presentation on Environmental Justice in the NWI 2050 Plan which will go out for public comment on April 1. We are doing case studies and best practices and have identified seven stressors: disability, limited English, low income, minority, senior, veteran and no vehicular access. Scott will provide his presentation via email to the committee.

Charles Bradsky presented on the Transportation Improvement Program process. At the direction of INDOT we are doing a five-year TIP, but USDOT is most concerned with the first four years. Each project in the TIP must be fiscally constrained annual. Any funds unspent in a year will go back to INDOT and back to the feds. Charles described the four types of modifications which can be done in the TIP. He demonstrated the R-TIP tool which can be accessed by anyone at <https://rtip.nirpc.org>. Contact Charles Bradsky with questions.

Peter Kimball presented on the Regional Broadband Analysis which shows that 20.75% of the region residents have no internet access. These involve communities of East Chicago, Gary, Shelby and Wheeler. Indiana is making a large effort to increase broadband with \$100 million available. The deadline to apply is April 5.

Dominique Edwards said the presentations shows some of what the agency does and the importance of public involvement in our planning process. The Public Participation Plan Federal regulation 23 CFR 450.316, located in the back of the Business Plan which was adopted at the last meeting, outlines federally mandated engagement. NIRPC' 2014 plan had more aspirational goals and objectives. Our mandate includes planning requirements, Title VI, Clean Air, ADA, and the Older Americans Act. Our Plan needs to be updated and this committee was tasked with guiding the development of the Plan.

Feedback from the committee was provided:

- Who  
Involve disability community leadership, youth representation, senior representation. Provide link to livestream and/or audio recordings. Share on Facebook and hold a watch party. Give transit provider information.
- What  
Provide linkages to informational materials on flyers; Use more inclusive formats
- Where and When  
Be sure to easily list times and locations of meetings
- Why  
Reasons to attend: \$800 M funding available, transit, transportation, environmental, economy
- How  
Elinks, PDFs, make flyers more inclusive, bold the "requests for alternate format language, and links in flyer to additional resources, get RSVPs, Include TTY information on flyers, use of database and a "how did we do?" feedback page.

Dominique Edwards said open houses will be held next month and asked that the committee take some of the flyers back with them. The NWI 2050 Plan drives development and federal transportation dollars. Kathy Luther added that the public needs to understand why their attendance is worth their time and why their voice matters.

Kathy Sipple said Valpo Next Asset Based Community Development Training is coming up and she will send information when it becomes available.

The next meeting will be on May 8 at 10 a.m. at NIRPC. Hearing no further business, Justin Kiel adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.