

Transportation Resource Oversight Committee Meeting (Lake & Porter Counties)

Tuesday, September 24, 2024

9:00 a.m. CST at NIRPC Office, Lake Michigan Room

Agenda

- 1) Call to Order by Chairman and Pledge of Allegiance
- 2) Meeting Minutes of May 21, 2024
ACTION REQUESTED: Approval
- 3) Public Comments
*Chair will recognize audience members who have signed up to comment on agenda items.
Time is limited to 3 minutes per commenter.*
- 4) Program of Projects update
 - a) Discussion about recent changes in NIRPC's Program of Projects.
ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion
- 5) NOFA Discussion (One-on-one meetings should be scheduled with NIRPC staff).
Applications posted on the NIRPC website here:
<https://events.in.gov/event/transportation-resource-oversight-committee-troc-porter-lake-counties>
ACTION REQUESTED: Discussion
- 6) New Business
 - a) Road Safety Audits are being finalized.
ACTION REQUESTED: Informational
 - b) Consultant contracts: NIRPC will need to review and approve PE & CE contracts before awarding funds.
ACTION REQUESTED: Informational
 - c) Other New Business not discussed earlier
- 7) Adjournment
The next TROC Lake/Porter Meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Lake Michigan Room at the NIRPC office.

**Transportation Resource Oversight Committee Meeting
(Lake and Porter County)
Tuesday, May 21, 2024
Minutes**

Charles Bradsky called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was streamed live on YouTube. In attendance were Mark O'Dell (Chesterton), Julio Arichavala (East Chicago), Dean Button (Hammond), Jessica Alanis (Hammond), Duane Alverson (Lake County), Sandy McDaniel (Portage), Jeff Huet (Schererville), George Topoll (Union Township), Beth Shrader (Valparaiso), Bob Thompson (Valparaiso), Silvia Lombardo, Scott Pruitt, Trisha Nugent, and Alex Olesker.

NIRPC staff included Charles Bradsky, Tom Vander Woude, Stephen Hughes, Kevin Polette, Ann Weitgenant, and Candice Eklund.

Approval of Minutes

The February 20, 2024, TROC meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Dean Button and seconded by George Topoll.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Program of Projects (PoP) Update

Charles Bradsky discussed funding options for the new Valparaiso / Shorewood Forest (SF) Urbanized Area (Valpo-SF UZA) (Group 2). The projects in the TIP for the City of Valparaiso were awarded before the new UZA was created. NIRPC recommended that these projects should continue to be funded through a combination of funds from the Chicago UZA and the Valpo-SF UZA. There were discussions on how new projects within the UZA boundaries should be funded going forward because the new UZA doesn't have enough money to fund their current list of projects. The new UZA will receive approximately \$2 million a year. Beth Shrader asked how other MPOs were handling this transition. Charles responded that this new UZA was the only new UZA in the state of Indiana and that each division within each state operates within its own guidelines. Tom Vander Woude added that an MPO receives highway funding based on population in the urbanized areas. As an MPO, NIRPC establishes a Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA); which is the area in which NIRPC conducts their metropolitan planning activities and the area in which NIRPC can spend FHWA funding. NIRPC receives a separate amount of funding for the new UZA, but it can be allocated anywhere within the MPA. It was questioned if the Valpo-SF UZA should be combined with Group 1 (Lake and Porter Counties) or have them be its own UZA, as is done for our other Group 2 (Michigan City / La Porte UZA). Tom Vander Woude suggested that for the near future, the Northwest Indiana and the Valpo-SF UZAs should continue to use funding the way they have been because the Census Bureau has a new formula every 10 years, and the Valparaiso projects are currently funded in Group 1 until FY 2028. A guidance document should be drafted and approved before the NOFA applications are submitted this fall. A vote was requested to be taken to combine the funding and continue as they do now. Dean Button mentioned this decision needs to be recommended to the TPC and the Commission for their approval since all of the communities weren't present at today's meeting. On a motion by Jeff Huet and seconded by George Topoll, the TROC voted to recommend funding current and future projects within the Valparaiso - Shorewood Forest UZA with of combination of the Northwest Indiana and Valpo-SF UZA funds. The vote was unanimous with zero opposing and zero abstaining.

Charles informed the committee that the USDOT has Approved NIRPC's Air Quality Conformity Determination Report and NIRPC's 2024-2028 TIP has been reviewed by both FHWA, FTA, and INDOT. At the time of the meeting, it is waiting for signatures of the INDOT Commissioner's and the Governor's signatures. Following this,

the TIP will need the approval of the USDOT (FHWA & FTA) before it can go out for a 3-day public comment period before going into the STIP. Once it is in the STIP, NIRPC's 2024- 2028 TIP will be officially approved.

New Business

With safety being a top priority this year with FHWA, who adopted the 'Vision Zero' initiative, Charles Bradsky showed a short video on 'Safe Streets for All / Vision Zero' (<https://youtu.be/EYwEyc2d0ms>). This revolutionary approach to safety aims to work towards eliminating all traffic fatalities and serious injuries and advocates this initiative should be the responsibility of everyone; roadway designers, automobile designers, and users. In addition, USDOT has noted that safety is one of their emphases this year. Charles noted that the NOFA this fall will emphasize safety in awarding of project selections.

Charles reported we would need to shuffle some projects in the TIP due to the findings from the Local Quarterly Meetings (LQM) that wrapped up last week. A meeting to accomplish this task is scheduled for June 11 to balance the Program of Projects. FYs 2025 and 2027 are currently balanced; FY 2026 has a deficit, and FY 2028 has a surplus of funding.

New Administration Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Workshop

This workshop was held on February 29, 2024, and was well attended. If you could not attend or did attend and would like to review the materials again, you can now view a video of the presentation at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s166JbXGfBQ> and download workshop materials [HERE](#).

Other Business

Road Safety Audits (RSAs)— Kevin Polette mentioned that last week, a questionnaire was sent out seeking participation from municipalities/counties to develop a list of locations for RSAs because NIRPC is hiring a consultant to perform RSAs at high-crash locations throughout Northwest Indiana. The location requests are due May 31, 2024. This initiative will be performed annually.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m. The next meeting will be held on November 19, 2024.

The livestream video recording for this meeting is available on NIRPC's YouTube Channel at [Transportation Resources Oversight Committee - Lake/Porter Counties 5-21-24 - YouTube](#)