

NIRPC Executive Board Meeting
6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN
June 20, 2024 Minutes

Call to Order

Chair Tom Dermody called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Due to technical difficulties, the meeting was not streamed live on YouTube.

New Appointments to the Commission

Ty Warner announced the appointments to the Commission of Jack McGraw (Burns Harbor) and Mayor Eddie Melton (Gary).

Roll call - Taken by Candice Eklund.

Present

The 9 Executive Board members present at the meeting included Kevin Breitzke (Porter County Surveyor), Tom Dermody (La Porte), Denise Ebert (Wanatah), Bill Emerson (Lake County Surveyor), Justin Kiel (La Porte County Council), Wendy Mis (Munster), Lisa Rosenkranz (LaCrosse), Tom Schmitt (Schererville), and Jim Ton (Chesterton).

The 7 other Commissioners present at the meeting included Austin Bonta (Portage), James Burge (Porter), Robert Carnahan (Cedar Lake), Daina Dumbrys (Michiana Shores), David Phelps (Beverly Shores), George Topoll (Union Township), and John Yelkich (Lowell). Matt Deitchley, representing INDOT, was also present.

Absent

Executive Board member Jim Pressel (Governor Appointee) was not in attendance.

Hebron, Kingsbury, and The Pines have appointed no representatives to NIRPC.

The staff members present included Ty Warner, Tom Vander Woude, Denarie Kane, Kevin Polette, and Candice Eklund.

Public Comment – There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 18, 2024, Full Commission meeting were approved on motion by Wendy Mis and seconded by Kevin Breitzke.

Report of the Chair – Tom Dermody

Tom Dermody had no updates to report.

Report of the Executive Director - Ty Warner

Ty Warner said the Greenways and Blueways maps have arrived at NIRPC and are now being distributed to libraries and bike shops. Maps were available for pickup after the meeting, and the electronic version can be found on the NIRPC website at [GreenwaysBlueways-Regional-Trails-MAP-2024.pdf \(in.gov\)](#).

Warner reminded the Executive Board that at the Full Commission meeting on April 20, 2024, the new committee structure was approved, which also included giving authority to the Executive Board to approve the details of how those committees would function. Warner reported on those details as proposed, stating the new structure will simplify the format into four committees: Transportation, Environment, and Economy & Place – which align with the focus areas of NIRPC’s enabling statute– and a new Leadership committee to address overall administrative and financial matters. With the designation of the Economic Development District in 2019 from the USED, NIRPC has a solid economic development path, and the Economy & Place committee helps ensure the full value of that designation is realized in. There are also existing subgroups not formally part of the committee structure that will continue to meet because they each have a specific purpose and appear to be serving the agency well: the Transportation Resource Oversight Committee (TROC), the *NWI Recover* Revolving Loan Fund (RLF), and the

Transit Operators who meet independently. Details for each of the four committees as laid out in the meeting materials were discussed. On motion by Jim Ton and seconded by Wendy Mis, the Executive Board approved the roles and responsibilities of the new committee structure as they were presented. Kevin Breitzke noted that the total membership count for the Leadership Committee was incorrect and needed to be changed from 12 Commissioners to 13 Commissioners. On motion by Jim Ton and seconded by Wendy Mis, the Executive Board approved this change.

Environmental Management Policy Committee (EMPC) – Bill Emerson

Bill Emerson reported the EMPC met on May 2, 2024, and heard a presentation from Reggie Korthals on Stormwater Permitting. Kathy Luther presented on the physical area of the climate action plan that NIRPC is part of through the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. Bill Emerson stated he was honored to be appointed to their steering committee as part of the comprehensive climate action plan for the entire metropolitan area. The next EMPC meeting is scheduled for August 1, 2024.

Finance & Personnel Committee (F & P) – Wendy Mis

Wendy Mis reported the F&P Committee met this morning to review financial reports, bank reconciliations, and claim registers for April and May 2024. The F&P Committee recommended the action items below for approval by the Executive Board.

Resolution #24-07: Requesting the Indiana State Board of Accounts (SBOA) Provide More Detailed Accounting for the Audits it Requires Be Conducted and that the State of Indiana Cover the Costs of Those Audits. Ty Warner stated the F&P Committee approved this draft resolution at their April meeting. Two issues are covered in this resolution regarding the invoices the SBOA submits for their audits: first, the invoices should include detailed accounting information as the SBOA would require of any other invoice, and second, the State of Indiana is asked to pay for the audits that the SBOA requires. On motion by Kevin Breitzke and seconded by Jim Ton, the Executive Board approved Resolution 24-07.

Resolution #24-06: Authorizing the Submittal of the EDA FY 2024 Partnership Planning Grant Application to Administer the Economic Development District. Ms. Kane stated this resolution pledges the local match for the Economic Development Administration's partnership planning grant, which is available to the Economic Development Districts (EDD) in Indiana. The local match is \$70,000, which will allow NIRPC to continue to advance its EDD efforts. On motion by Bill Emerson and seconded by Tom Schmitt, the Executive Board approved Resolution 24-06.

Tom Vander Woude presented on the Corradino LLC Agreement for Road Safety Audits (RSA's) for 2024-2025. The contract amount is \$143,986.88 and allows for 15-20 RSAs within the region for each of the two years. The funding will be flexed into the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) over the course of two years and will use Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds. On motion by Kevin Breitzke and seconded by Jim Tom, the Executive Board approved this contract.

Technical Planning Committee (TPC) - Kevin Breitzke

Kevin Breitzke reported the TPC met on June 4, 2024. The Committee heard presentations from staff updating the Non-Profit Transportation Feasibility Study and the new committee structures recently approved by the NIRPC Commissioners. No actions were taken during the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for August 6, 2024.

INDOT – Matt Deitchley

Matt Deitchley reported mowing efforts are underway across the state. The Safety Summit that INDOT held last month discussed ways to improve safety on all roadways in Indiana. A public outreach engagement for the I-80/94 Borman Flex Road project will be held on August 14 and 15 in Illinois and Indiana. Locations and times have not been determined.

INDOT announced a commitment of \$50 million in Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to support safety improvement projects on local roads across Indiana. The project call will be open from September 3 to October 11, 2024. For more information, go to [INDOT commits \\$50 million for local safety projects \(wimsradio.com\)](https://www.wimsradio.com). Matt also announced the next opportunity to apply for Community Crossings will be from July 1-31, 2024.

Other Business

Ty Warner made the following additional announcements:

- With the approval of the new committee structure, a survey will be sent to the Commissioners to indicate what committee(s) they would like to serve on. Some committees may continue to meet in parallel with the old committee structure as NIRPC transitions to the new structure, particularly related to NIRPC's upcoming Notice of Funding Availability in the fall.
- Ty discussed [NIRPC's new website](#), which the Indiana Office of Technology created. The selections on the left side of the home page correspond with the four committees that were finalized today.
- Ty congratulated Talaya Jones and all NIRPC staff who participated in the FTA Triennial Review this month. NIRPC received a perfect review, as no issues were identified. The next quadrennial MPO Certification Review with the USDOT is scheduled for next year.

Announcements

Bob Carnahan relayed announcements of various events in Cedar Lake. It was also announced that both Portage and Cedar Lake will participate in the Farmer's Market in Portage every Friday afternoon from June to August.

Adjournment

Hearing no other business, Tom Dermody adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m. The next meeting on August 15, 2024, will be an Executive Board meeting.