



Minutes

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
FULL COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, December 19, 2023, 9:30 a.m.

Meeting Held in Person at Cass County Road Commission

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Doroh, Kurt, Vice Chair, Van Buren County Commissioner
Preston, Linda, Secretary, Cass County Representative
Gundersen, Kristen, Alternate Secretary, Berrien County Representative
Remus, Richard, Treasurer, Berrien County Representative
Petersen, Jan, Alternate Treasurer, Van Buren County Representative
Catherman, Rick, Van Buren County Representative
Curran, Jim, Berrien County Commissioner
DeLong, Don, Cass County Representative
Dodd, James, Cass County Representative
Durm-Hiatt, Marge, Berrien County Representative
Freehling, Teri Sue, Berrien County Commissioner
Hanson, Sandra, Van Buren County Representative
Leary, Tina, Van Buren County Representative
Pantaleo, Paul, Berrien County Representative
Stauffer, Dick, Berrien County Representative
Torzynski, Robert, Pokagon Band Representative
Tyler, Doug, Cass County Representative
Wood, Gary, Berrien County Representative

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Marchetti, Roseann, Chair, Cass County Commissioner
Fette, Dan, Berrien County Representative
Newton, Matthew, Van Buren County Representative
Patterson-Gladney, Gail, Van Buren County Commissioner
Wuerfel, Julie, Berrien County Commissioner

GUESTS PRESENT:

Marcy Hamilton, Mike Huber, Heather Rudnik, Kim Sinclair, Dawn Marie Smith, Kevin Stack, Beat Stocker, Crystal Welsh

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Kurt Doroh called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Office Manager, Maria Vettraino took roll call, and a quorum was present.

2. ACCEPTANCE AND/OR REVISION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chair Kurt Doroh presented the Consent Agenda. Teri Sue Freehling moved to **“ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA.”** Rick Catherman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3. GRAHAM WOODHOUSE AWARD PRESENTATION

Director Egelhaaf explained the criteria for the Graham Woodhouse Award. The annual intergovernmental effort award was given to the collaborators responsible for the Berrien County Trails Master Plan. There were 20 identified partner organizations, 26 funders, and 32 resolutions of support from units of government. Vice Chair Doroh presented the awards to the recipients present.

4. WELCH LACKEY AWARD PRESENTATION

With the Welch Lackey recipient Gail Patterson-Gladney not present, Director Egelhaaf stated this award will be presented at the February 2024 Board meeting.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Director Egelhaaf opened the floor to questions regarding the Executive Director’s Report. Egelhaaf went over the survey results for MIO Technical Assistance and the next steps involved. Discussion ensued about project submissions and the timing of windows of opportunity. He then discussed updates with Palisades in our final stage of Action Strategy Development.

Teri Sue Freehling asked if we have received resolutions from all three counties for Materials Management. Director Egelhaaf stated we have received a resolution or minutes from each county.

Rick Catherman moved to **“ACCEPT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT.”** Linda Preston seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

6. 2020 ADJUSTED CENSUS URBAN BOUNDARIES (ACUB)

Niles Buchanan Cass Area Transportation Study (NATS)

Twin Cities Area Transportation Study (TCATS)

Director Egelhaaf gave an overview of adjusted census, in which all urban areas within the state are reviewed and adjusted to smooth the urban/rural boundaries for transportation planning purposes. He explained the process of the review, the purpose, and the results and how that impacts MPO planning areas.

Dick Stauffer moved to **“APPROVE NATS 2020 ADJUSTED CENSUS URBAN BOUNDARIES.”** Gary Wood seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dick Stauffer moved to **“APPROVE TCATS 2020 ADJUSTED CENSUS URBAN BOUNDARIES.”** Gary Wood seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

7. COOPERATIVE ACCORD FOR LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Between the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) & SWMPC

Director Egelhaaf explained the re-confirmation of the Cooperative Accord with NIRPC, which explains our cooperation when we address urban areas.

Gary Wood moved to “**APPROVE COOPERATIVE ACCORD FOR LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING.**” Paul Pantaleo seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

8. 2024 HEALTH INSURANCE WAIVER CONSIDERATION

2011 Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act

Annually the Board is asked to consider three options for how SWMPC insurance costs will be shared between staff and the organization. The three options were presented by Director Egelhaaf with projected 2024 costs and changes from 2023 to 2024 (9.07% increase). The three options considered by the board were: a hard cap, an 80/20 split, or an exemption that would allow for the continuation of the previous 98/2 split.

Rick Catherman moved to “**APPROVE AN EXEMPTION TO THE 80/20 OR HARD CAP COST SHARE.**” Paul Pantaleo seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

9. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S EVALUATION

Salary Consideration (Moved from October SWMPC Meeting)

Vice Chair Doroh discussed the process for the Executive Director Evaluation. The committee recommended a 5% salary increase for 2024.

10. RESOLUTION 2023-14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONTRACT

Dick Stauffer moved to “**APPROVE RESOLUTION 2023-14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S CONTRACT WITH 5% INCREASE.**” Linda Preston seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

11. LEASE DISCUSSION

Director Egelhaaf shared that our office lease is coming to an end. Egelhaaf worked with a realtor to look at other options available and concluded that re-signing with our current landlord is the best option.

12. 2024 PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE

Vice Chair Doroh presented the 2024 meeting schedule which will be held at the Van Buren ISD Conference Center in Lawrence Michigan.

Jan Petersen moved to “**APPROVE 2024 PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE.**” James Dodd seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

13. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Sinclair, with the Van Buren Conservation District, introduced herself to the Board. Sinclair shared that she will be joining the Board next year, replacing Jan Petersen.

14. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Vice Chair Doroh asked Jim Curran and Tina Leary to sit on the Nominating Committee to select proposed slate of Executive Committee Officers.

15. ADJOURNMENT

James Dodd moved to adjourn the meeting. Sandra Hanson supported the motion. The Vice Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

Respectfully submitted by:



K. John Egelhaaf, AICP

Date: December 19, 2023