

# **MINUTES**

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Full Commission Meeting

Tuesday, February 18, 2020 9:30 a.m.

Berrien County Health Department Conference Center

2149 E. Napier Avenue, Benton Harbor, MI 49022

## **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Hanson, Don, Chair, Van Buren County Commissioner  
Freehling, Teri Sue, Vice Chair, Berrien County Commissioner  
Akinwale, Yemi, Treasurer, Berrien County Representative  
Preston, Linda, Secretary, Cass County Representative  
Gundersen, Kristen, Alternate Secretary, Berrien County Representative  
Remus, Richard, Alternate Treasurer, Berrien County Representative  
Curran, Jim, Berrien County Commissioner  
Doroh, Kurt, Van Buren County Commissioner  
Fette, Dan, Berrien County Representative  
Foerster, David, Van Buren County Representative  
Hanson, Sandra, Van Buren County Representative  
Laylin, Leon, Cass County Representative  
Marchetti, Roseann, Cass County Commissioner  
Meeks, Donnie, Berrien County Commissioner  
Newton, Matthew, Van Buren County Representative  
Pantaleo, Paul, Berrien County Representative  
Patterson-Gladney, Gail, Van Buren County Commissioner  
Payne, Gloria, Berrien County Representative  
Schueneman, James, Berrien County Representative  
Stauffer, Dick, Berrien County Representative  
Stover, Jim, Berrien County Representative  
Torzynski, Robert, Pokagon Band Representative  
Tyler, Doug, Cass County Representative

## **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

DeLong, Don, Cass County Representative  
Janssen, Judy, Van Buren County Representative  
Schueneman, James, Berrien County Representative  
Stover, Jim, Berrien County Representative

## **STAFF PRESENT:**

K. John Egelhaaf, Executive Director  
Patrice Rose, Office Manager  
Kris Martin, Associate Planner

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Teri Sue Freehling called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Office Manager, Patrice Rose took roll call and a quorum was present.

**2. ACCEPTANCE AND/OR REVISION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Freehling presented the Agenda and requested that item 8.b. RPI UPDATE be added to the Agenda. Roseann Marchetti moved to **“ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH THE RECOMMENDED CHANGES,”** Yemi Akinwale seconded. The motion carried.

**3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Director Egelhaaf gave a brief overview of the report, requesting that members indicate items that they wished to discuss.

Some additional discussion took place regarding the Mobility Manager position for 2020. The Palisades Nuclear Plant decommissioning process was discussed relative to the impending SWMPC funding application to EDA. Kurt Doroh explained that he was concerned that a public engagement committee might be filled with individuals that were not genuinely local. They might be experts of some sort but not actually tuned in to the concerns of local Van Buren County citizens. Egelhaaf explained that the SWMPC process to build an economic recovery plan for the impacted communities would be highly participatory and locally driven.

Leon Laylin moved to **“ACCEPT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT.”** Yemi Akinwale seconded the motion, which carried.

**4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S EVALUATION**

Chair Freehling presented the findings of the Executive Director Evaluation, stating that the scores were high and that she received 100% participation from staff. She was asked if she had researched salaries paid to Executive Directors in the other regions in the Michigan Association of Regions. She reported that it was done 2 years ago and at that time found the salary paid to Egelhaaf falls in the middle. Freehling recommended a 3% increase. Don Hanson moved that the **“THE DIRECTOR RECEIVE A 3% SALARY INCREASE for 2020.”** Roseann Marchetti seconded, and the motion carried.

**5. PERFECT ATTENDANCE RECOGNITION**

Chair Freehling recognized Board Members with perfect attendance in 2019, they are: Yemi Akinwale, Kristen Gundersen, Don Hanson, Sandra Hanson, Leon Laylin, Roseann Marchetti, Donnie Meeks, Gail Patterson-Gladney, Linda Preston, and Rich Remus.

**6. PER DIEM AND PROFILE FORMS**

Director Egelhaaf briefly referred to the Per Diem and Expense Verification form. He also highlighted the importance of the Board Membership Form when reporting to some of our funding partners.

## **7. SIGNATORY RESOLUTION 2020-1**

Director Egelhaaf presented a Signatory Resolution, designating signatory responsibilities according to the SWMPC operational policies and procedures. Kurt Doroh moved to **“APPROVE THE SIGNATORY RESOLUTION,”** Gail Patterson-Gladney seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the resolution passed.

## **8. PERSONNEL POLICY & PROCEDURE UPDATE–MERS 401**

Director Egelhaaf outlined the desired change to the Personnel Policy & Procedure Manual with regard the 401 Plan. The current version reads, “New employees shall be enrolled in the retirement program on the annual enrollment date of January 1, provided they have completed six months of full-time employment.” The new language reads, “New employees shall be enrolled in the retirement program beginning the first pay period of the month following completion of six months of full-time employment.” Gloria Payne asked if the Municipal Employees Retirement System (MERS) Plan allowed the proposed change. Egelhaaf stated that he had checked with MERS and yes, it is allowed. He also stated that he believes the current verbiage is a carryover from a previous plan. Don Hanson moved to **“APPROVE THE CHANGE TO THE EMPLOYEE’S PERSONNEL POLICY AND PROCEEDURE MANUAL AS PRESENTED.”** Leon Laylin seconded, a roll call vote was taken and the motion carried.

### **8.a. RPI UPDATE**

The wind-down of the Regional Prosperity Initiative was explained by Director Egelhaaf. The presentation covered the financial side of the issue and a summation of the projects funded during the five years of activity. As conversation evolved further, the work that Upjohn had funded by RPI was discussed. The board was clear about its interest in having Lee Adams, director of Southcentral Michigan Planning Council come to a subsequent SWMPC board meeting to present on both the talent match project and their housing tool for southwest Michigan.

## **9. IN-MI RIVER VALLEY TRAIL EXTENSION PRESENTATION**

Associate Planner Kris Martin gave an informative PowerPoint presentation on the IN-MI River Valley Train Extension. He answered questions, regarding signage, bike safety and guidelines, followed by discussion. Linda Preston noted that opportunities may exist for extension of the trail east into Cass County, possibly connecting to Arthur Dodd Park. Kris provided the following sources for more information on the trail; [www.swmpc.org/inmitrail.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/inmitrail.asp), [www.facebook.com/FriendsOfTheIMRVTrail/](https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfTheIMRVTrail/), or contact Kris at: [martink@swmpc.org](mailto:martink@swmpc.org).

## **10. BUDGET**

Director Egelhaaf presented the 2020 Budget, and answered questions. Kurt Doroh made the motion to **“APPROVE THE 2020 BUDGET AS PRESENTED.”** Gloria Payne seconded. A roll call vote followed, the motion carried.

## **11. PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **12. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

Roseanne Marchetti shared that Edwardsburg is beginning the process to apply for a Safe Routes to School Grant, stating that all four elementary schools are eligible.

John Egelhaaf expressed gladness to see Gloria Payne back and getting around after her accident.

## **13. ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 11:21 a.m.



Respectfully submitted by:

K. John Egelhaaf, AICP

Date: February 18, 2020

### *SWMPC Mission Statement*

*Our team uses its passion and expertise to connect people, assist communities and advance cooperative solutions to regional challenges experienced by the communities that created us.*