

MINUTES

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday, October 23, 2008

2:00 p.m.

SEWRPC Satellite Office
Milwaukee County Research Park
Technology Innovation Center, Room 114
10437 West Innovation Drive
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

Present:

Excused:

Committee Members:

Thomas H. Buestrin, Chairman
Richard A. Hansen, Vice-Chairman
William R. Drew
James T. Dwyer
Adelene Greene
Michael J. Miklasevich
Daniel S. Schmidt
David L. Stroik
Gustav W. Wirth, Jr.

Staff:

Philip C. Evenson
Loretta Watson

Executive Director
Executive Secretary

ROLL CALL

Chairman Buestrin called the meeting to order at 2:10p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 25, 2008, MEETING

On a motion by Mr. Wirth, seconded by Mr. Stroik, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on September 25, 2008, were approved as published.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT, MR. STROIK REPORTING

(Meeting of October 23, 2008)

Mr. Stroik reported that the Administrative Committee, at its meeting held just before the Executive Committee meeting, had taken the following actions:

1. Reviewed and approved the Commission disbursements for two financial reporting periods: Year 2008 Nos. 20 and 21, extending over the period September 15, 2008, to October 12, 2008.
2. Reviewed the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for the financial reporting period ending October 12, 2008. With about 80 percent of the year completed, the projections indicated a year end surplus of about \$57,000, exclusive of income from interest and miscellaneous sales.
3. Received a report that group medical insurance rates for 2009 through the Group Insurance Board operated for local governments by the State of Wisconsin increased for 2009, but by significantly varying amounts. The standard plan, which is used by few employees, increased by about 10 percent. Of four health maintenance organization plans offered on the basis of uniform benefits, the plan offered by Anthem had an extraordinarily large increase of over 37 percent, while the three others had increases ranging from five to ten percent.

There being no questions or comments, on a motion by Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mr. Drew, and carried unanimously, the Administrative Committee report was approved.

REPORT ON CONTRACTS

Chairman Buestrin asked Mr. Evenson to review the proposed contracts and agreements, noting that the Committee members had received a table listing one contract prior to the meeting. Mr. Evenson then briefly reviewed the contract reported on the table, noting that it pertains to a work effort requested by Racine County that would update the Racine County Hazard Mitigation Plan now documented in SEWRPC Community Assistance Plan Report No. 266, *Racine County Hazard Mitigation Plan, August 2004*. This work project will be undertaken over a two-year period at a cost to Racine County of \$30,000.

A brief discussion then ensued relative to the possibility that perhaps the Commission could cost-effectively and consistently prepare such hazard mitigation plans for all seven of the counties. Mr. Evenson noted that in the first-round of such planning, the Commission had completed such plans at the requests of Kenosha, Racine, and Milwaukee Counties. Mr. Hansen indicated that by doing all such plans for the Region it may be possible to identify some synergistic relationships that would help the seven-counties operate more efficiently. In response to a suggestion by Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Evenson said that he would determine how the first-round of such plans had been completed for Ozaukee, Walworth, Washington, and Waukesha Counties and report back to the Committee at its next meeting.

Following that discussion, on a motion by Mr. Drew, seconded by Mr. Stroik, and carried unanimously, the report relative to the contract was accepted and placed on file (copy of report attached to Official Minutes).

WORK PROGRAM REPORTS

Mr. Evenson reported that staff continues to develop summary materials attendant to the preliminary regional water supply system plan put forth by the Commission's Regional Water Supply Plan Advisory Committee. Presentations are now being made throughout the Region to groups of county and local elected officials. A plan summary newsletter is nearing completion. It is the staff's intent to schedule public informational meetings in all seven counties of the Region in an effort to solicit public and elected official feedback on the preliminary recommendations. Time and resources, Mr. Evenson continued, mitigate against holding a regional plan conference on this matter this year.

In response to a question by Mr. Stroik, Mr. Evenson indicated that there are a series of water demand management activities suggested for several groups of water utilities in the Region. In general, he noted, the more aggressive water conservation water recommendations in terms of demand management are addressed to those utilities that rely on groundwater and face significant capital investment requirements. A very aggressive program would include subsidizing the replacement of existing inefficient toilets in homes.

Mr. Evenson also reported that the Commission's Environmental Justice Task Force had met recently to discuss several matters. He asked Commissioner Greene, who chairs that Task Force, to report to the Committee on a particular recommendation of the Task Force relative to the Commission undertaking socio-economic impact analyses attendant to all regional plans, including the forthcoming regional water supply plan.

Ms. Greene recalled that the Task Force has been meeting periodically for about 15 months. Commission staff has been briefing the Task Force members on the regional land use and forthcoming regional water supply plan. Moreover, she said, the Task Force has been working to suggest nominees for the Commission's Advisory Committee that will help guide the regional housing study. In its most recent meeting, she said, the Task Force recommended that the Commission sponsor the preparation of a socio-economic impact analysis on each of its regional plans as it is completed or updated. Moreover, the Task Force recommends that this analysis be undertaken by an independent consultant.

A discussion then ensued relative to the recommendation of the Task Force. Mr. Dwyer indicated that the Commission will have to be very careful in responding to this proposal given the severe budget constraints that the Commission has been under for over five years. Mr. Hansen indicated that perhaps the Commission should view this recommendation as an opportunity to respond to concerns being expressed about the Commission's work efforts, particularly in the Milwaukee area. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Miklasevich, Mr. Evenson indicated that the preparation of a socio-economic impact statement is already called for in Federal planning requirements relative to transportation matters and indeed, the Commission staff in past planning efforts has attempted to address at least some of the issues concerned. It is not yet clear to him, he continued, precisely what Task Force members believe needs to be done, particularly with respect to the regional land use plan which underpins all of the Commission's regional planning work. Mr. Drew suggested that the staff continue to work with the Task Force in addressing this matter and keep the Commission up-to-date over the next several months, it being the intent of the Commission to respond to the Task Force recommendations in as positive a manner as possible consistent with budget realities. Mr. Bustrin concurred, noting that it remains to be determined whether or not additional work needs to be done and if so, whether or not it would be done best by an outside consultant.

Mr. Evenson concluded his work program report by noting that the quadrennial Federal certification review of the Commission's transportation planning program is presently underway. He noted that on the prior evening, the Federal agencies – Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration – had sponsored a public meeting in the Milwaukee downtown Transit Center. He thanked Commissioners Bustrin, Drew, Stroik, and Wirth for attending that public meeting and interacting with members of the general public who attended. The record of comments received from the general public throughout the Federal certification review process will be provided to all Commissioners as in past such reviews. At some point in the future, probably early in 2009, the Federal agencies concerned will provide their certification findings and report directly to the Commission.

CONSIDERATION OF CREATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING STUDIES

Recalling that the Commission staff had been working with the Environmental Justice Task Force and other parties for several months attempting to populate the roster of an Advisory Committee that would guide the conduct of the forthcoming regional housing study update, Mr. Evenson distributed a proposed Committee roster (copy attached to Official Minutes). He noted that he had asked Commissioner Drew, who has extensive background and experience in housing matters in the City of Milwaukee, to Chair the Advisory Committee and that Mr. Drew had agreed to do so. He then reviewed the proposed roster with the Committee, noting that these members are drawn from throughout the seven-county region and represent a number of different sectors, including government, housing production and sales, housing advocacy groups, and research and policy institutions. The basic thrust of the housing study, he said, would be to identify subareas of the Region where more affordable housing needs to be provided to enable individuals to live closer to job locations, and to identify and suggest remediation of constraints to the provision of affordable housing in these areas. Another thrust of the study, he said, involved subsidized housing. Mr. Drew, he said, requested that the study design include a retrospective analysis of subsidized housing decision-making in Milwaukee over the past several decades, with a view toward identifying lessons learned from the results of such decisions.

Mr. Hansen commented that he has personally been involved in low-income housing issues for over 20 years as part of two not-for-profit organizations. From personal experience, he said, there are very large problems involved in sustaining the supply of subsidized housing in the future. Tax incentives are disappearing, properties are wearing out, and deferred maintenance is becoming a major issue. He suggested that the Commission study include a focus on these issues, including interviews with experienced property managers.

In response to an inquiry from Ms. Greene, Mr. Evenson indicated that not quite half of the Committee members were chosen from the nominees submitted by members of the EJTF. In response to a question by Mr. Stroik, Mr. Evenson indicated that once the housing study design is completed and reviewed by both the Advisory Committee and the EJTF, the Commission staff would be in a better position to discuss with Commissioners the financial ramifications of the work.

At the conclusion of this discussion, on a motion by Mr. Dwyer, seconded by Ms. Greene, and unanimously carried, the Commission created a 30-member Housing Study Advisory Committee as recommended by the Commission staff.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Evenson reported that the Commission had received a formal notification that the Racine County Board of Supervisors has confirmed County Executive William L. McReynold's reappointment of Commissioner Miklasevich to the Commission for a six-year term to expire on September 15, 2014. Mr. Evenson noted that the Commission awaits learning of appointment or reappointment actions by Governor Doyle and by three other counties in the Region where Commissioner appointments expired on September 15, 2008.

Mr. Evenson reported that the Commission's Chief Telecommunications Engineer, Kenneth J. Schlager, has been asked to speak at the Governor's Northern Wisconsin Economic Development Conference about the work the Commission is doing relative to wireless telecommunications in the Town of Wayne and Kenosha County.

Mr. Evenson also reported that he and the Commission's Deputy Director, Kenneth R. Yunker, had met recently with Milwaukee County Supervisor John Weishan concerning a report prepared by him and soon to be submitted to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors. That report, he said, will recommend that Milwaukee County ask the Legislative Audit Bureau to undertake a program audit of the Commission. Moreover, he said, that report will ask the Commission to establish an urban team and staff that team in an office in Milwaukee. He indicated that he would keep the Commission informed of this matter as it moves through the Milwaukee County governance structure.

Finally, Mr. Evenson reported that a previously reported resolution introduced by Milwaukee City Alderman Robert J. Bauman and others that would urge the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors to withdraw from the Commission would be heard the following week by the Steering and Rules Committee of the Common Council. He indicated he would also keep the Commissioners informed about this matter.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m., on a motion by Mr. Wirth, seconded by Mr. Miklasevich, and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip C. Evenson
Deputy Secretary

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Attachments