

Minutes of the Forty-fourth Meeting of the
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE

DATE: September 4, 2019

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

PLACE: Social Development Commission
Boardroom
1730 W. North Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53205

Members Present

Aloysius NelsonCommissioner, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission;
Chair Director, Division of Veterans Services, Kenosha County

Yolanda Adams (by phone) Wisconsin Deputy State Director for the Elderly,
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

Huda Alkaff (by phone) Founder and Director, Wisconsin Green Muslims

Ella Dunbar Program Services Manager, Social Development Commission, Milwaukee

Fabi Maldonado Racine County Supervisor, District 2

Keith Martin..... Engineering Specialist - Advanced 2, Wisconsin Department of Transportation,
Southeast Region

N. Lynnette McNeely.....Legal Redress Chair, Waukesha County NAACP

Guests and Staff Present

Dennis Grzezinski Law Office of Dennis Grzezinski

Gary Korb Public Involvement and Outreach Specialist, SEWRPC

Eric Lynde.....Chief Special Projects Planner, SEWRPC

Benjamin McKay Deputy Director, SEWRPC

Montre Moore Public Involvement and Outreach Specialist, SEWRPC

Kevin Muhs..... Executive Director, SEWRPC

Terina Nelson..... Member of the Public

Nakeisha Payne Public Involvement and Outreach Manager, SEWRPC

Karyn Rotker.....Senior Staff Attorney, ACLU of Wisconsin

Jennifer Sarnecki..... Principal Transportation Planner, SEWRPC

Bruce Wiggins Member of the Public

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Nelson called the meeting of the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) to order at 4:34 p.m., welcoming those in attendance and thanking Ms. Dunbar for hosting the meeting at the Social Development Commission.

Mr. Muhs introduced Mr. Maldonado, Racine County Supervisor, noting that he is in the process of being appointed by the Commission as the Racine County representative on the EJTF. Mr. Maldonado shared that, in addition to representing District 2 on the Racine County Board of Supervisors, he is also the new Political Director for Voces de la Frontera, which is a group that addresses labor and immigration policy.

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 21, 2019, MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any questions or comments on the May 21, 2019, meeting minutes. There were none. Mr. Nelson then asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Martin moved, and Ms. McNeely seconded, the approval of the May 21, 2019, meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Nelson asked if there were any public comments. Ms. Rotker noted in regards to the agenda item discussing Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) service cuts that there is an imbalance of highway funding versus transit funding and that the State Legislature should allocate more funds for transit. She requested that Commission staff acknowledge the disparate impacts of transit service contraction on people of color.

Mr. Grzezinski expressed support for the reports prepared by Commission staff that identify the importance of more extensive and frequent transit service and requested that staff highlight how the system changes to MCTS are inconsistent with recommendations in VISION 2050. He indicated that although the Commission regularly identifies the need for additional transit services, decisions at the State level have not resulted in additional transit services.

Mr. Wiggins noted a story on National Public Radio that reported that inner city neighborhoods are hotter than outlying neighborhoods as a result of less tree canopy, more pavement, and more automobile emissions. Mr. Wiggins encouraged members of the EJTF to read the article and review the maps comparing heat and income by census tract (available [here](#)). Ms. Rotker noted that maps of the City of Milwaukee and City of Madison are available online. Mr. Wiggins stated that it would be interesting to compare heat and income regionwide.

REVIEW OF ACTION ITEM LIST

Mr. Nelson asked Mr. Lynde to review the EJTF Action Item List (available [here](#)). Mr. Lynde explained that Commission staff are continuing to track action items requested by EJTF members. He noted that staff will be further discussing the two open action items, including holding a panel of local planners and engaging seniors in minority communities, with Ms. Schellinger. He noted that staff will continue working to implement the four ongoing action items. He then reviewed the closed action items since the previous meeting, highlighting that the list of Commute to Careers grant recipients was shared with EJTF members at the request of Mr. Nelson. Mr. Lynde indicated that Commission staff has reviewed Employ Milwaukee's process for evaluating Board of Director candidates and that the process could be considered in the process of evaluating future EJTF candidates and during a possible future update of the EJTF background document. Mr. Lynde also noted that the Walnut Way Conservation Corporation has been a Primary Organization, but was accidentally omitted from the list presented to the EJTF, which has since been corrected. Mr. Nelson indicated that the goal of the action item list is to track progress of EJTF member requests and asked staff to post the action item list on the Commission website and keep it current. The following discussion occurred after the presentation of the action item list:

1. Ms. Dunbar asked whether there is a vacancy for the EJTF seat held by Mr. Wade. Mr. Muhs indicated that staff has been following the lead of Mr. Wade's previous employer, Employ

Milwaukee, regarding Mr. Wade's membership on the EJTF and has decided to pursue potential candidates to fill Mr. Wade's City of Milwaukee seat. He stated that staff is open to suggestions for potential candidates, noting that EJTF membership is not associated with any particular agency or organization and that Mr. Wade's replacement does not need to come from the workforce development field. Ms. McNeely asked if staff has provided a list of potential candidates for vacancies on the EJTF to existing EJTF members for input. Mr. Muhs responded that he did not believe they have, but that staff would verify that. Mr. Nelson asked about the process for identifying and reviewing potential candidates. Mr. Muhs responded that staff solicits potential candidates from the EJTF and may also reach out to Commissioners, then researches the qualifications of the candidates with a goal of having a variety of backgrounds and population groups represented on the EJTF.

[Secretary's Note: After the meeting, Commission staff verified that potential task force candidates have not been shared with the EJTF in the past. The EJTF's role in the process has been to provide potential candidates to staff for evaluation prior to staff making a recommendation to the Commission.]

REVIEW OF COMMISSION'S AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN

At the request of Mr. Nelson, Mr. Muhs presented the Commission's current Affirmative Action Plan for 2019-2020 (available [here](#)) and discussed ways to increase diversity among candidates for open positions at the Commission. The following discussion was generated during the presentation:

1. Ms. Dunbar indicated that the reference to WMCS Radio should be updated to WNOV Radio (860 AM), Milwaukee, in item C.1(a). Mr. Muhs asked if there were additional changes to radio or newspaper references and Ms. McNeely and Ms. Dunbar agreed the remaining media sources appeared correct. Ms. Dunbar asked if staff had a list of media for sending news releases. Mr. Muhs responded that Commission staff does have a list of news outlets to which they send news releases, but the news outlets decide whether or not to publish each news release.
2. Mr. Maldonado asked whether the Commission posts jobs on social media, noting that younger generations utilize social media more than newspapers to view job postings. Mr. Muhs noted that Commission staff does post open positions on social media, but the Commission cannot target specific populations. Mr. Maldonado asked if the Commission posts employment opportunities in the Racine Journal Times and the Kenosha News. Mr. Muhs responded that staff would verify that.

[Secretary's Note: The Commission posts employment opportunities in the Region's minority newspapers and online with the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, but does not post employment opportunities in the Racine Journal Times or Kenosha News. It should be noted that staff has not found newspaper ads to be a particularly effective means of reaching potential employees.]

3. Ms. McNeely gave positive feedback on the list of minority and women's groups the Commission notifies about job postings and asked if staff has relationships with the organizations. Ms. Payne and Mr. Muhs responded that staff does have relationships with the groups.

4. In response to Ms. Dunbar, Mr. Muhs indicated that the Commission has a strong history of promoting from within and building internal expertise by offering tuition support for staff seeking additional educational opportunities. He noted that staff are currently working to formalize the Commission's tuition reimbursement policy, to which Mr. Nelson expressed support.
5. Ms. McNeely asked about differences between men and women in the clerical numbers presented. Mr. Muhs indicated that the number of women in clerical positions is reflective of historical differences in how those positions were filled and that many clerical positions are currently filled by staff that have been at the Commission for many years. He further noted that the Commission offers opportunities for clerical staff to develop experience and skills that would allow them to grow into technical, professional, and managerial positions at the Commission.
6. Mr. Nelson asked if EJTF input over the years has been helpful in diversifying its staff. Mr. Muhs stated that he believed it has, although it has been a significant challenge and the Commission is continually working to increase diversity among its staff.
7. Ms. Dunbar noted that the Social Development Commission will be leading a Complete Count Committee for upcoming 2020 U.S. Census and asked if the Commission staff would be willing assist in understanding U.S. Census data, particularly tools available to use the data. Mr. Muhs responded that staff would certainly be willing to help and would follow up with Social Development Commission staff to arrange a meeting.

[Secretary's Note: After the meeting, Commission staff followed up with Ms. Dunbar to schedule time to discuss U.S. Census data and will meet with Social Development Commission staff at their convenience.]

8. Regarding personnel activity in the past year, Mr. Nelson suggested the term "termination" implied that an employee was forced to leave. Mr. Muhs indicated that he believed termination is a standard term in the human resources profession to refer to staff who are no longer employed, but that staff will attempt to modify the language to make it clear that termination could be either voluntary or involuntary.

[Secretary's Note: After the meeting, Commission staff reviewed the text related to personnel activity in the past year and will consider edits to clarify that terminations can include all employees that left the Commission when preparing the 2020-2021 Affirmative Action Plan.]

9. Ms. McNeely asked how many employees the Commission had at its peak staffing level. Mr. Muhs responded that the Commission's peak staffing level was about 110 individuals, which occurred during a time when the Commission was responsible for labor-intensive processes such as hand-drawing maps and computing tax bills, which the Commission no longer performs. Mr. McKay added that this high number of staff also included individuals hired to digitize maps for the entire Region, which ended in approximately the mid-1990s.
10. Mr. Muhs requested input from EJTF members regarding additional organizations or programs that Commission staff can partner with to generate interest in employment. Ms. Dunbar suggested finding ways to expose students to planning and engineering during the summer. Mr. Muhs noted that staff has discussed options for a summer program and has researched programs, such as the

Future Leaders in Planning (FLIP) program organized by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. Mr. Lynde noted that the FLIP program generates interest and enthusiasm through field trips that provide opportunities to see planning work behind the scenes. Mr. Muhs noted that Commission staff would like to develop a similar program, but it would depend on staffing capacity and would likely require partnerships with other organizations. Mr. Maldonado noted that partnerships could be formed with Milwaukee Public Schools, including possible after-school programs. In response to Ms. McNeely, Ms. Payne noted that Commission staff works with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and could continue to coordinate to identify potential programming and possibly funding. Mr. Muhs indicated that the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Planning Association is sponsoring a student program around a housing development in Madison called "Terrace Towns," which could be considered in Milwaukee. Ms. McNeely added that a student program should encourage local students from neighborhoods such as the 53206 zip code to become involved and share their perspectives. Ms. Dunbar shared that the Social Development Commission has a large youth services program and could connect Commission staff to programs that focus on a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) curriculum, including the Milwaukee School of Engineering. Mr. Wiggins added that the Boys and Girls Club could be another partner to generate interest in planning and engineering among students.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND OUTREACH UPDATE

Ms. Payne reviewed the September 2019 Public Involvement and Outreach Report (see Attachment 1 to these minutes). She noted that it continues to be challenging for staff to achieve its outreach goals this year due to a temporary decrease in Public Involvement and Outreach Division staffing levels between May and July.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL MILWAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM SERVICE CHANGES

Mr. Muhs provided a handout of the potential Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) service changes identified by Milwaukee County (see Attachment 2 to these minutes), which was provided at public meetings held to discuss the County's budget. He noted that the routes proposed to be eliminated would reduce access to downtown Milwaukee and to business parks in the metro area. He indicated that the reductions are the latest in 20 years of continued service declines that reflect the County's financial situation, which has largely been the result of decisions made at the State level. Mr. Muhs' update generated the following discussion:

1. Mr. Maldonado asked about the conclusions of the financial analysis staff prepared for VISION 2050. Mr. Muhs clarified that federal law requires the Commission to prepare a fiscally constrained transportation plan that identifies what projects can be implemented based on available funding and current restrictions on that funding. Mr. Muhs noted that under these fiscal constraints, the transit expansion recommended in VISION 2050 would not be achieved due to the inability of local governments to generate additional funding for transit on their own through dedicated local taxes or a regional transportation authority, both of which are currently not allowed by State law.
2. Ms. McNeely asked if the high-speed rail funds Wisconsin returned to the federal government could be used for other transit-related projects. Mr. Muhs indicated that they could not.

3. Ms. Dunbar asked about the funding sources that make up the MCTS budget. Mr. Muhs indicated that funding for MCTS comes approximately 25 percent from fares, 20 percent from Federal funds, and 20 to 30 percent from local funds, with the balance of funding provided by the State.
4. Ms. Dunbar asked about the timeline for the service changes. Mr. Muhs noted that the proposed service cuts would be effective on January 1, 2020, but clarified that the County Board has not yet discussed the transit service changes. He also noted that while public transit systems in Southeastern Wisconsin have been contracting, many peer transit systems across the country have been expanding.

[Secretary's Note: On September 19, 2019, Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele announced that \$4 million was redirected to restore most of the routes identified for reductions, including the freeway flyer routes, Routes 52, 55, 80, 44U, 40U, and Route 137. The final budget is scheduled for County Board consideration on November 12, 2019.]

5. Ms. McNeely asked about how access to outlying areas would change under the service cuts and if it was appropriate for the Commission to promote alternatives to the service cuts. Mr. Muhs responded that access will be reduced if the routes are no longer in service and creative solutions would be needed to continue to provide access to outlying areas. He noted that Commission staff does not typically recommend specific transit options to MCTS, but that the Commission has recently hired staff to assist with promoting transportation options and created a Workforce Mobility Team in 2018, which has offered transportation options to businesses in areas difficult to serve by transit, including in business parks in the Cities of Franklin and Mequon, and even the Menomonee Valley. Examples of the types of transportation alternatives that have recently been pursued by employers beyond the extent of the transit service area include carpooling, shuttles, and partnerships with ride-hailing services. Ms. Dunbar suggested that alternatives could include smaller buses, shuttles, or low-interest loan programs for automobile purchases.
6. Ms. Rotker suggested that a future agenda include discussion on the adverse impact of transportation funding choices on people of color. She offered to identify someone who could speak to the EJTF about the subject.
7. Mr. Nelson asked how MCTS could cut 16 routes, but maintain service for 97 percent of riders. Mr. Muhs responded that most of the routes do not operate on a full day's schedule and that the freeway flyer routes are among the routes with lower ridership levels. He noted, however, that reductions to these routes affect the usefulness of the rest of the transit system by limiting access to jobs.
8. Ms. Dunbar suggested riders need to be made aware of the urgency related to the proposed service cuts. Mr. Muhs indicated that MCTS has provided information on the potential service cuts on their buses and through media outlets.
9. Mr. Wiggins noted that Milwaukee County is encouraging the public to provide comments to the State Legislature related to funding levels. Mr. Muhs indicated that other transit systems typically fund transit through a local sales tax and/or a regional transportation authority.

10. Ms. McNeely asked about the feasibility of efforts to develop private transit services in the Milwaukee area. Mr. Muhs noted that there are proposals for privately funded commuter rail in the Milwaukee area; however, implementation poses significant challenges and privately funded transit services have not historically been successful.

UPDATE ON UWM CAUSIER LECTURE

Mr. McKay confirmed that this year's UW-Milwaukee Causier Lecture, which is hosted annually by the School of Architecture and Urban Planning, has been scheduled for October 22, 2019, and will feature Professor John A. Powell. Mr. McKay indicated that details about the lecture and reception will be shared as soon as Commission staff receives information.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

No further public comments were received.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

1. Ms. Dunbar shared that the Social Development Commission is hosting the 2019 Summit on Poverty Partnership on October 7 and 8, 2019, and noted that there are opportunities for scholarships. Speakers include Rev. R. William J. Barber, Dr. Shaili Jain, Dr. Monica White, and Dr. Marc Lamont Hill. Ms. Dunbar also promoted the Minority Health Film Festival, which will be held September 12-15, 2019.

NEXT MEETING DATES

Mr. Muhs noted that a meeting date has not yet been set and that Commission staff will contact EJTF members to identify a future meeting date.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nelson asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. McNeely moved, and Mr. Martin seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric D. Lynde
Recording Secretary

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Public Involvement and Outreach EJTF Report September 2019

GOALS FOR 2019 PIO DIVISION

- Increase amount of time spent in each county by 2%-5%
 - Temporary decrease in PIO staffing levels will reduce the ability to meet this goal this year
- Increase contact made with SEWRPC partners
 - Community Partners – Four (4) times per year
 - Annual Community Partner meeting held Tuesday, August 20th
 - Primary Organizations – Three (3) times per year
 - Top 100+ - Two (2) times per year
- Biannual update letters to partners
 - Fall letter to Top 100 to be done in September/October
- Update annual reporting to reflect contact made with groups related to women, seniors, people with disabilities and veterans
 - New 2018 annual report process to now reflect these major groups
- Educational Outreach
 - Meeting with MMSD about their water education program to either mirror or partner with them
- Internal educational outreach
 - Brown Bag lunch in conjunction with the Special Projects Division

2ND QUARTER CONTACTS

Outreach Activities for the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission: May to August 2019

Month	Community Partners	Primary Organizations
May	2	8
June	1	6
July	3	8
August	20	15
Total	26	37

Note: Contacts are based on meetings and activities that were held with individuals (one-on-one meetings), small group discussions, and meetings and activities sponsored by formal organizational entities.

Source: SEWRPC



Green Schools Consortium



2019 LULAC National Convention



Waukesha Sustainability Fair



Fiscal Crisis Leads to Bus Route Reductions

Milwaukee County has reached a fiscal crisis point, and we need your help. Over the past decade, Milwaukee County taxpayers have increased income and sales tax payments to the State by \$355 million, yet shared revenue and other funding from the state has declined or remained flat over the same time period.

County Executive Chris Abele and County Supervisors have been strong supporters of transit.

Unfortunately, limitations in state law have caused Milwaukee County to effectively reach the cap on the amount it can collect from property and sales tax. State and Federal transit support has been stagnant, especially in comparison to inflationary cost increases, and grant monies that have helped past budgets are increasingly scarce.

These fiscal constraints on Milwaukee County impact MCTS's ability to maintain and expand transit services. Unless there is a state solution, balancing future County budgets will continue to involve tough decisions.

The proposed 2020 Transit Budget includes significant service changes. Although 97% of annual ridership would not be impacted by these changes, the total number of bus routes could be reduced from 51 to 35 by ending the following services:

- ▶ 6 Freeway Flyer routes - 40, 43, 44, 46, 48, 49
- ▶ 4 UBUS Routes - 40U, 42U, 44U, 49U
- ▶ 5 Shuttles - 17, 137, 219, 223, 276
- ▶ Route 52 Clement - 15th Avenue
- ▶ Route 55 Layton Avenue: would no longer have service west of S.76th Street
- ▶ Route 80 6th Street: would no longer have service south of MATC South Campus

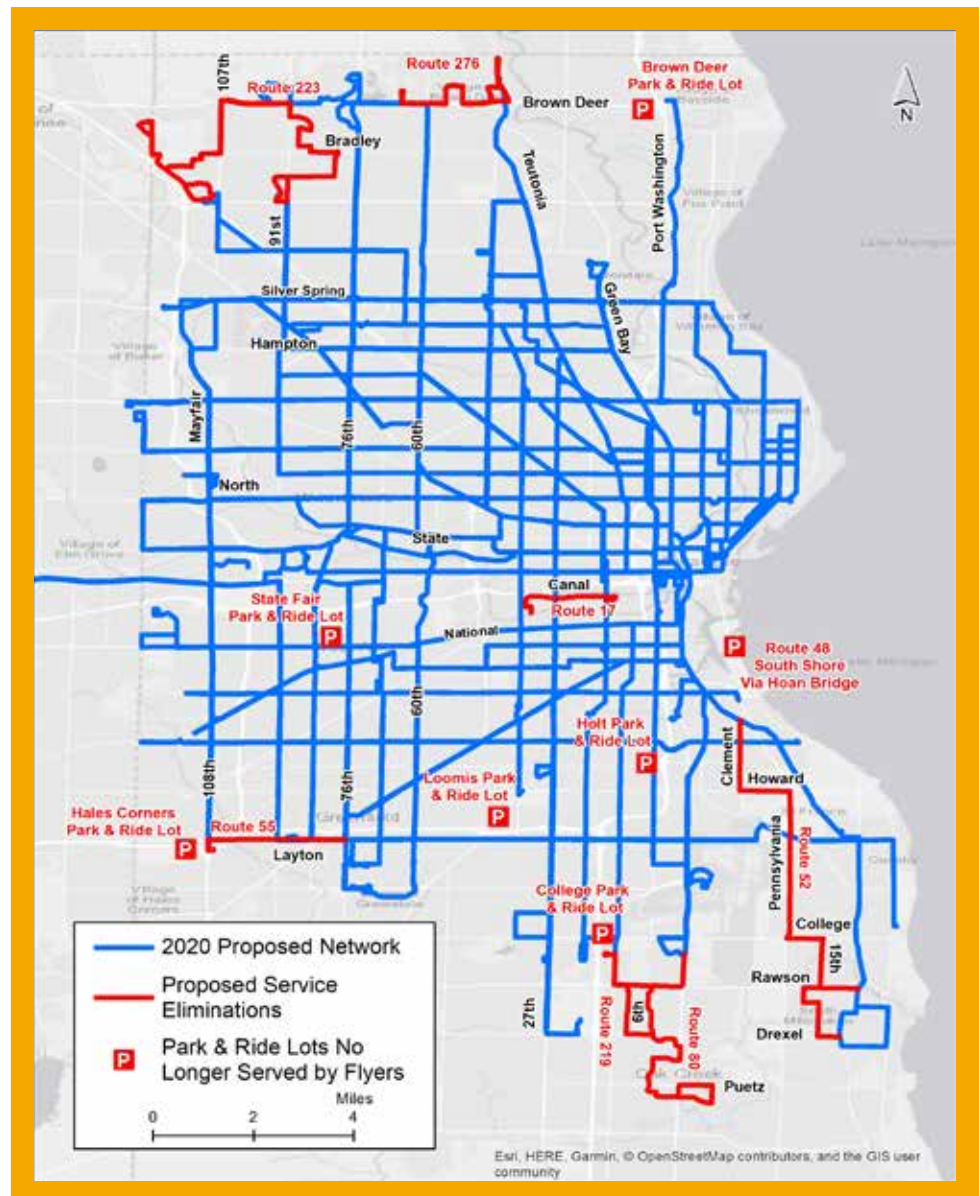
Seasonal services could also be eliminated as a cost-saving measure:

- ▶ Brewers Line buses for Miller Park
- ▶ Wisconsin Avenue Downtown shuttles for ethnic festivals and Summerfest
- ▶ Freeway Flyer service for Summerfest may also be impacted
- ▶ Freeway Flyers for German Fest, Irish Fest and Festa Italiana
- ▶ Shuttle and Freeway Flyer services for Wisconsin State Fair



The proposed changes are necessary to bring expenses in line with limited revenues. These changes were informed by Racial Equity considerations and route efficiency measures to minimize impacts on total riders.

There are no budgeted changes to the Paratransit Program.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- 1 Voice your concerns at upcoming budget open houses across the County.
- 2 Sign the petition supporting a **Fair Deal for Milwaukee County** -- a proposed partnership between state government and Milwaukee County that will help generate the revenue Milwaukee County needs to fund essential public services and cultural amenities, and invest in our future.
Visit [county.milwaukee.gov/Fair-Deal](https://www.county.milwaukee.gov/Fair-Deal) for more.
- 3 Tell your state legislators how important public transportation is to you.