

MINUTES
SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
ANNUAL COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, June 17, 2020

3:00 p.m.

Meeting occurred virtually via Video and Telephone Conference

Present:

Excused:

Commissioners:

Charles L. Colman, Chairman
Michael A. Crowley, Vice-Chairman
Donna Brown-Martin
Thomas H. Buestrin
Mike Dawson
Jose Delgado
James Dwyer
Mary Knipper
James A. Ladwig
Aloysius Nelson
Robert W. Pitts
Jennifer K. Rothstein
Jeffrey D. Schleif
Adam Schlicht
Daniel S. Schmidt
Peggy L. Shumway
David L. Stroik
Gustav W. Wirth, Jr.

Steve Bostrom
Theodore Lipscomb, Sr.

Staff:

Kevin J. Muhs	Executive Director
Benjamin R. McKay	Deputy Director
Elizabeth A. Larsen	Director of Administration

ROLL CALL

Chairman Colman called the 271st meeting of the Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present. Chairman Colman indicated for the record that Commissioners Bostrom and Lipscomb had asked to be excused.

INTRODUCTION AND SEATING OF NEW COMMISSIONER (MILWAUKEE COUNTY)

Chairman Colman called on Ms. Brown-Martin to introduce the Commission's newest Commissioner, Mr. Adam Schlicht. Ms. Brown-Martin stated that Mr. Schlicht was appointed to the Commission by Governor Tony Evers to represent Milwaukee County. She noted that Mr. Schlicht currently serves as the Director of PortMilwaukee and provided a brief summary of his background.

Mr. Stroik made a motion, seconded by Mr. Crowley, and carried unanimously, to formally seat Mr. Adam Schlicht as a Commissioner representing Milwaukee County on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Schlicht then stated that he is honored to participate as a Commissioner representing Milwaukee County.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MARCH 11, 2020, QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING

On a motion by Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mr. Stroik, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the March 11, 2020, Quarterly Commission Meeting were approved as published.

ELECTION OF COMMISSION TREASURER

Chairman Colman reported that the Executive Committee had nominated Mr. David Stroik to serve as Treasurer for the remainder of Ms. Nancy Russell's term, which continues through December 2020. There being no other candidates nominated, on a motion by Mr. Dwyer, seconded by Mr. Crowley, Mr. Stroik was unanimously elected Treasurer of the Commission.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Colman called on Mr. Stroik to present the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Stroik noted that a copy of the Treasurer's Report had been provided to all Commissioners for review prior to the meeting and called attention to the following items:

1. Based upon disbursements through April 26, 2020, it is projected that total disbursements for the year will approximate \$7.96 million. Revenues are projected at about \$8.15 million, exclusive of interest income and miscellaneous revenues.
2. The total amount of funds held by the Commission in the various operating, liability, and reserve accounts approximates \$5.2 million. The various accounts are identified on the second page of the report.
3. As of April 26, 2020, the Commission had in investments and cash on hand approximately \$6.7 million. \$5.6 million are invested in the State of Wisconsin Local Government Pooled Investment Fund. As of April 26, 2020, that fund was yielding 0.51 percent interest. Other funds are held in savings, checking, and certificate of deposit accounts at several banks.

There being no further discussion, on a motion by Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mr. Schleif, and carried unanimously, the Treasurer's Report for the period ending April 26, 2020, was approved (copy of the Treasurer's Report is attached to the Official Minutes).

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning and Research Committee

Chairman Colman asked Mr. Schmidt to present the Planning and Research Committee report. Mr. Schmidt noted that the report had been provided to all Commissioners prior to the meeting. He also noted that the Planning and Research Committee had met once since the Commission's Quarterly meeting on March 11, 2020.

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On May 26, 2020, the Committee took the following actions:

- Reviewed and accepted the “Record of Public Comments: 2020 Review and Update of VISION 2050”
- Considered and approved the 2020 Review and Update of VISION 2050

There being no discussion, on a motion by Mr. Dwyer, seconded by Mr. Pitts, and carried unanimously, the Planning and Research Committee Report was approved (copy of the Planning and Research Committee Report is attached to the Official Minutes).

Administrative Committee Report

Chairman Colman asked Mr. Dwyer to present the Administrative Committee report. Mr. Dwyer noted that the report had been provided to all Commissioners prior to the meeting. He also noted that the Administrative Committee had met two times since the Quarterly Commission Meeting on March 11, 2020.

On Thursday, April 23, 2020, the Committee took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and approved disbursements for four financial periods: year 2020 Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7 for the period February 3, 2020, to March 29, 2020.
2. Reviewed the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for the financial reporting period ending March 29, 2020.
3. Received an update on the network capacity and server upgrade.

On Thursday, May 14, 2020, the Committee took the following actions:

1. Reviewed and approved disbursements for two financial periods: year 2020 Nos. 8 and 9, for the period March 30, 2020, to April 26, 2020.
2. Reviewed the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for the financial reporting period ending April 26, 2020.
3. Considered and approved budget assumptions for 2021.
4. Discussed a report on business insurance.

There being no discussion, on a motion by Mr. Dwyer, seconded by Mr. Nelson, and carried unanimously, the Administrative Committee Report was approved (copy of the Administrative Committee Report is attached to the Official Minutes).

Executive Committee Report

Commission Chairman Colman, as Chairman of the Executive Committee, provided the Executive Committee report. He stated that the Executive Committee had met two times since the Quarterly Commission Meeting on March 11, 2020. A report on the April 23, 2020, and the May 14, 2020, follows:

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At both meetings, the Committee:

1. Received and approved a report from the Administrative Committee relative to its meeting that day.
2. Reviewed and approved proposed contracts for planning work. Six contracts were approved in April and two contracts were approved in May. The details of those contracts are set forth in a table attached to the Committee report.
3. Received a report outlining progress on key planning efforts being undertaken by the Commission in 2020. The most recent report was attached to the Committee report.

In addition, at its April meeting the Committee:

1. Received an update on the Commission elevator repair.

At its May meeting, the Committee took the following other actions:

1. Appointed David L. Stroik as Interim Commission Treasurer.
2. Reviewed and approved amendments pending public comment, to the 2019-2022 Regional TIP. These amendments to the 2019-2022 TIP were necessary to advance eight existing projects and 16 new projects, which were approved by the Commission's Advisory Committees on Transportation System Planning and Programming for the Kenosha, Milwaukee, and Racine Urbanized Areas.
3. Reviewed and approved an Amendment to the 2019 Overall Work Program that shifts Federal Highway Administration planning funds to the Chloride Impact Study.

There being no discussion, on a motion by Mr. Stroik, seconded by Mr. Schmidt, and carried unanimously, the Executive Committee Report was approved (copy of the Executive Committee Report is attached to the Official Minutes).

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2021

Chairman Colman noted that copies of the proposed Commission budget for calendar year 2021 had been provided to all Commissioners for review prior to the meeting. He then asked Mr. Muhs to briefly present the proposed budget.

Mr. Muhs led the Commissioners through the proposed budget document noting that the assumptions underlying the budget had been reviewed and approved by the Commission Administrative Committee at its May monthly meeting, with this budget being the fifteenth year of no increase to the tax levy amount.

Mr. Colman then stated that he was in receipt of a letter from Washington, Waukesha, and Racine Counties requesting that the Commission strongly consider a budget decrease for the 2021 tax levy request.

Mr. Colman stated that the Commission has sufficient reserves to consider this request, however he does not want to see the tax levy permanently reduced and it is the intent for the tax levy to return to the 2020 amount in 2022.

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Mr. Muhs stated that Mr. Josh Schoemann, Washington County Executive, had reached out to him to discuss the requested reduction in the tax levy, but that the County Executive had not specified an amount. Given the context of the expected decrease in the County's financial resources, Commission staff were proposing a reduction between 4 percent and 6 percent, should the Commission determine that a reduction is appropriate. He further stated that a 5 percent tax levy decrease could be achieved by eliminating the two currently vacant positions that were included in the proposed 2021 budget previously presented to the Administrative Committee.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Pitts, Mr. Muhs stated that each County would receive a levy reduction, with the total reduction amounting to \$118,000 or a 5 percent decrease in the total tax levy.

Mr. Muhs was asked if it was a good idea to not hire for the vacant positions. Mr. Muhs responded that the vacancies are in the Land Use and Transportation Divisions. The need to hire for the vacancy in the Transportation Division may not be immediate, with the demand for the vacant Land Use Division position more immediate.

Mr. Buestrin stated that the Commission can easily reduce the tax levy by the 5 percent, but with the clear understanding that this is a one-time reduction and the levy would return to the 2020 total amount in 2022.

Ms. Brown-Martin noted the progress with regard to regional cooperation that has been made during the past few years, citing as examples Foxconn and conversations regarding better coordination between transit operators. She also noted the Commission has been instrumental in those conversations, and in helping the Counties and other local governments in the Region in meeting increased Federal and State obligations and requirements. She argued that decreasing the funding for short-term fiscal gains could have long-term impacts on the Commission's ability to assist local governments and coordinate regional cooperation.

Mr. Colman stated the he appreciated Ms. Brown-Martin's words and sentiment, but the 5 percent tax levy reduction is not troublesome in the limited fashion being discussed.

Mr. Dwyer asked what the impact of the reduction is to each of the Counties. Mr. Muhs stated that the reduced levy has a mill rate of 0.0011 percent, well below the statutory cap of 0.003 percent. The tax levy reduction amounts by county are as follows: Kenosha, \$5,735; Milwaukee, \$44,325; Ozaukee, \$7,425; Racine, \$6,735; Walworth, \$8,595; Washington, \$9,405; and Waukesha, \$36,290.

Mr. Dwyer stated that these decreases are not significant amounts to the Counties in light of the size of their overall budgets, and reiterated that the Commission has held the budget flat for the past 15 years and the reserve funds that have been set aside are a result of good planning by the Commission staff. He noted his concern that once the Commission decreases the tax levy amount the Counties will continuously ask for a decrease.

Mr. Schleif asked if there were additional services the Commission can help the Counties with, reducing their need to hire staff or consultants. Mr. Muhs stated that Commission staff is in the process of developing a survey, planned before the request to reduce the levy was received, to send to the counties and other local governments to determine what services they would like the Commission to provide.

Ms. Rothstein stated that she is in agreement with Mr. Dwyer and noted that in the Commission's efforts to maintain a zero increase budget that efficiencies had already been found and difficult decisions already made.

Mr. Ladwig stated that in the current fiscal times, it is not unreasonable to request a budget reduction, and not filling the two vacant positions will not have a significant impact on the Commission's work.

Mr. Schlicht stated that he is not in favor of the 5 percent tax levy cut, as it is not a substantial amount for Milwaukee County, but is a substantial amount for the Commission.

Mr. Schleif stated that Washington County has mandatory furloughs and is making its own cutbacks, and that it is appropriate that the Commission not be isolated from the shared difficulties of governments across the Region in these difficult times.

Mr. Pitts also stated that a 5 percent cut is acceptable, in the context of the expectation that it is not a permanent reduction.

Mr. Stroik stated that he spoke with Mr. Schoemann and understands both viewpoints. He would like the Commission to be cooperative, but to clearly state this is a one time decrease to the tax levy that is expected to be reversed once the economy recovers.

Mr. Schmidt noted that he is in agreement with Mr. Stroik, however he recalled that in the past it has been very difficult to raise the tax levy and wants to be very clear this is a one-time reduction.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Crowley, Mr. Muhs stated that the 5 percent reduction was developed by staff in light of the amount of cuts expected in Washington County's upcoming budget.

There being no further discussion, on a motion by Mr. Stroik and seconded by Mr. Crowley, the Budget for calendar year 2021 was adopted as amended by a vote of 16 ayes and 2 nays.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF THE *INTERIM REVIEW AND UPDATE OF VISION 2050: A REGIONAL LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN* (Resolution No. 2020-06)

Chairman Colman asked the Commission to consider Resolution No. 2020-06, *Reaffirming and Updating the Adopted Year 2050 Regional Land Use and Transportation Plan ("Vision 2050") for Southeastern Wisconsin, and Reaffirming The 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program for Southeastern Wisconsin as Amended to Date*. He noted that these materials were provided prior to this meeting.

Mr. Muhs presented Resolution 2020-06, and summarized the changes proposed to VISION 2050 under this interim update. He noted that this type of review and update is a required every four years under Federal regulations, and that the process involves comparing the population, household and employment projections included in VISION 2050 to recent trends to ensure they are still adequate, reviewing progress on implementing recommendations in VISION 2050, and identifying changes to those recommendations based on new information, and changes in development patterns, travel patterns, and new technology.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Colman, Mr. Muhs stated that staff does plan to develop summary materials for the interim update that reflect the discussion around access to jobs and other opportunities for the Region's residents that occurred at the May Planning and Research Committee meeting.

There being no further discussion, on a motion by Mr. Schmidt and seconded by Mr. Dwyer, Resolution 2020-06 was adopted by a vote of 18 ayes and 0 nays (Copy of Resolution No. 2020-06 is attached to the Official Minutes).

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Muhs reminded the members of the Administrative and Executive Committees that the June 25, 2020 meetings will be held virtually.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, on a motion by Mr. Wirth, seconded by Mr. Ladwig, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Muhs
Deputy Secretary

KJM/BRM/EAL
#254117