

MINUTES

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday, February 17, 2022

1:30 p.m.

SEWRPC Office Building
Commissioners' Conference Room
W239 N1812 Rockwood Drive
Waukesha, WI 53188

Meeting Occurred in Person and Virtually via Video and Telephone Conference

Present:

Excused:

Committee Members:

James T. Dwyer, Chairman
Charles L. Colman
Michael A. Crowley
Aloysius Nelson
Robert W. Pitts
David L. Stroik
Gustave W. Wirth, Jr.

Donna Brown-Martin
Thomas H. Buestrin
Jonathan Delagrave
Daniel S. Schmidt

Staff:

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

ROLL CALL

Chairman Dwyer called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present. Chairman Dwyer indicated for the record that Commissioners Brown-Martin, Buestrin, Delagrave, and Schmidt had asked to be excused.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 20, 2022, MEETING

Chairman Dwyer asked if there were any changes or additions to the January 20, 2022, meeting minutes. There were none.

On a motion by Mr. Stroik, seconded by Mr. Crowley, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the Administrative Committee meeting held on January 20, 2022, were approved as published.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

2022 Reporting Period No. 2

Copies of the Check Register for the 2nd financial reporting period of January 3, 2022, to January 16, 2022, were distributed to the Committee.

Mr. Nelson inquired about several payments. Ms. Larsen responded as follows:

- TRB-National Academy of Sciences (page 2); this payment is for the annual dues and receipt of all TRB publications and is the primary source of transportation research journals for Commission staff.
- UWM Foundation (page 2); this payment is for University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee scholarship the Commission is sponsoring for the 2021 – 2022 school year.
- VIA CDC (page 2); this payment is for reimbursement to VIA CDC for assisting with outreach efforts for the North South Transit Enhancement Study. This is a pass-through payment to be reimbursed by Milwaukee County.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Dwyer concerning payment to James M. Mahoney (page 2), Ms. Larsen stated Mr. Mahoney is a Commission employee, and this is reimbursement for a floodplain modeling training course registration.

In response to an additional inquiry by Mr. Dwyer concerning payment to the Waukesha County Center for Growth (page 3), Ms. Larsen stated this is a reimbursement for outreach services conducted as part of the FlexRide study. The Commission has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to conduct a pilot ride share study to connect City of Milwaukee residents with employers in Waukesha County.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Stroik concerning payment to Great West Financial (page 2), Ms. Larsen stated this is for the employee contribution to the Wisconsin Deferred Compensation Program.

There being no additional questions or comments, on a motion by Mr. Nelson, seconded by Mr. Stroik, and carried unanimously, the Commission disbursements for the 2nd reporting period of 2022 were approved.

Chairman Dwyer, Mr. Stroik, and Mr. Muhs then affixed their signatures to the Check Register for the 2nd reporting period of 2022 (copy attached to Official Minutes).

2022 Reporting Period No. 3

Copies of the Check Register for the 3rd financial reporting period of January 17, 2022, to January 30, 2022, were distributed to the Committee.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Dwyer concerning payment to Kaleb Kutz (page 2), Ms. Larsen stated that Mr. Kutz is a Commission staff member who has requested tuition reimbursement in accordance with the Commission's tuition reimbursement program to help pay for a portion of his Master's in Urban Planning degree.

In response to a second inquiry by Mr. Dwyer concerning payment to the Waukesha County Business Alliance (page 3), Ms. Larsen stated this payment is for outreach services conducted as part of the FlexRide pilot study.

There being no additional questions or comments, on a motion by Mr. Crowley, seconded by Mr. Nelson, and carried unanimously, the Commission disbursements for the 3rd reporting period of 2022 were approved.

Chairman Dwyer, Mr. Stroik, and Mr. Muhs then affixed their signatures to the Check Register for the 3rd reporting period of 2022 (copy attached to Official Minutes).

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR PERIOD ENDING JANUARY 30, 2022

Copies of the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures as of reporting period No. 3, ending on January 30, 2022, were distributed for Committee review. Chairman Dwyer asked Ms. Larsen to review with the Committee the financial status of the Commission accounts as of the end of that period.

In reviewing the Statement with the Committee, Ms. Larsen commented that the period covered represented just under 10 percent of the calendar year. She then called attention to the following items:

1. The Federal and State revenue entries remain unchanged from the report presented at the January meeting.
2. The service agreement revenues remain unchanged from the report presented at the January meeting.
3. The liability accounts reported on the Statement reflect the findings of the 2020 financial audit.
4. The Commission had on hand as of January 30, 2022, just under \$7.0 million. This includes about \$390,310 of unearned revenue provided to the Commission in advance of expenditures.
5. The funds on hand are invested in the State of Wisconsin Local Government Investment Pool, which is presently paying 0.07 percent interest, certificate of deposit accounts and money market accounts.
6. This Statement reflects the January 2022 approved Commission Reserves Policy. The minimum and maximum reserve fund have been noted. These numbers reflect the findings of the 2020 Commission Audit and will be adjusted upon completion of the 2021 Audit.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Dwyer, Mr. Muhs stated within the next two years staff expects to conduct a household travel survey with an anticipated cost of \$2,500,000. This study is a multi-year undertaking and is conducted by the Commission every 10 years. In addition, the Regional Water Supply Plan and the Regional Housing Plan may need to be updated within the next few years.

Mr. Dwyer further inquired about systems in place to work with chief elected officials to determine common ground with respect to the Commission plans. Mr. Muhs stated that the Intergovernmental and Public Relations Committee has been established for this purpose. He then noted that he has been considering how to facilitate better regional collaboration regarding the Commission and the potential for other, non-Commission, shared services.

There being no questions or comments, on a motion by Mr. Pitts, seconded by Mr. Nelson, and carried unanimously, the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for the period ending January 30, 2022, was accepted to be placed on file (copy attached to Official Minutes).

DISCUSSION OF OVERALL SALARY INCREMENT TARGET FOR 2022

Chairman Dwyer asked Mr. Muhs to initiate the salary discussion. Mr. Muhs noted that this is a preliminary discussion regarding staff salaries. He stated that while the Commission budgets a three percent salary increase annually, with the actual increase falling between three and three-and-one-half percent due to promotion-related increases, he feels that the Commission will need to increase salaries as much as four-and-one-half percent during this calendar year.

Mr. Muhs then commented that given the current inflation rate of over seven percent, the current phenomena of the “great resignation,” and information gathered from the Society of Human Resource Management, many companies are now expecting increasing salaries at four-and-one-quarter percent or more.

The following discussion occurred:

Mr. Pitts inquired about the costs for this increase and if inflation went down, would there be a need for the higher than normal salary increase. Mr. Muhs responded that if inflation does decrease prior to July when increments are awarded, staff would reconsider the need for a higher increase.

Mr. Pitts then noted he does not have an issue with the increase.

Mr. Crowley stated that he feels the higher salary increase is fair considering the amount of work staff undertakes and that the Commission is the largest regional planning commission in the State. He also requested that staff conduct a salary and position survey of the other Wisconsin regional planning commissions. Mr. Muhs stated that he does have salary data from Wisconsin regional planning commissions and other national peer organizations.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Nelson, Mr. Muhs stated these would be merit-based increases and the Commission continuously monitors wages being offered at other planning agencies.

Mr. Colman noted that the smaller regional planning commissions in the State are generally in less expensive labor markets and may also have greater budget constraints than the Commission.

Mr. Wirth commented that the economy has not yet recovered from the 2008 recession and questioned whether the Commission increasing salaries at a higher-than-normal rate would lead to further inflation. He further noted that revenue sources, including service agreements, may not allow for increasing salaries.

Mr. Colman noted that while prices have risen sharply recently, inflation may settle down. Mr. Muhs stated that we still have the issue of keeping staff if wages are not increased similar to competing employers. Mr. Colman requested that staff explore and research salary information.

At 2:05 p.m., Mr. Dwyer recessed the Administrative Committee meeting to start the Executive Committee meeting to accommodate agenda item number three, “Presentation of Citations of Recognition to the members of the Milwaukee County Independent Redistricting Committee by Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman and Commissioner Marcelia N. Nicholson.”

At 2:26 p.m. the Administrative Committee meeting resumed.

Mr. Stroik stated he does support the salary increase and would also recommend that the Committee review the per diem amount for Commissioners.

Mr. Dwyer noted that comparing Commission salaries to the other regional planning commissions in the State is not an equal comparison given the size and labor market of Southeastern Wisconsin. He then suggested that staff put together a proposal for the salary adjustments.

Mr. Pitts stated that a salary increase indicates to employees they are appreciated and gives employees an incentive to stay with the Commission.

Mr. Nelson commented that a salary survey and review is an opportunity to learn and allow for an informed decision to be made.

CORRESPONDENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Dwyer asked Mr. Muhs if there were any correspondence or announcements. There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Stroik, seconded by Mr. Wirth, and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Muhs
Deputy Secretary