

MINUTES

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 23, 2007

2:00 p.m.

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

Present:

Excused:

Committee Members:

Thomas H. Buestrin, Chairman
William R. Drew, Vice-Chairman
James T. Dwyer
Adelene Greene
Allen L. Morrison (Alternate)
Daniel S. Schmidt
Gustav W. Wirth, Jr.

Richard A. Hansen
Michael J. Miklasevich
David L. Stroik

Absent:

Staff:

Philip C. Evenson
Loretta Watson

Executive Director
Executive Secretary

ROLL CALL

Chairman Buestrin called the meeting to order at 2:20 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared present. Mr. Evenson noted for the record that Commissioners Hansen, Miklasevich, and Stroik had asked to be excused. Mr. Buestrin noted that he had asked Mr. Morrison to attend the meeting as an alternate member of the Committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JULY 26, 2007, MEETING

On a motion by Mr. Wirth, seconded by Ms. Greene, and carried unanimously, the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on July 26, 2007, were approved as published.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT, MS. GREENE REPORTING (Meeting of August 23, 2007)

Ms. Greene 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 2007 Nos. 15, and 16, extending over the period July 9 to August 5, 2007.

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2. Reviewed the Statement of Projected Revenues and Expenditures for the financial reporting period ending August 5, 2007. With about 60 percent of the year completed, the projection indicates a year end surplus of about \$200,000.
3. Continued to review the Commission Personnel Regulations, focusing on those sections of the Regulations dealing with performance criteria, working hours, social security benefits, and State retirement benefits. The Committee approved a series of relatively minor changes to these sections in order to conform with current practices and to provide updated references to the Wisconsin retirement program.

There being no questions or comments, on a motion by Mr. Wirth, seconded by Mr. Schmidt, 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 the contracts and agreements prior to the meeting. Mr. Evenson then briefly reviewed the three contracts reported on the table, noting that one involves the annual work program contract for coastal management planning and technical support, one involves a minor amendment to an existing contract with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, relative to a flood study of the Milwaukee River in a portion of Milwaukee County, and one involves the annual stream gaging contract with the U.S. Geological Survey. The stream gaging contract, he said, requires the pass-through of funds by the Commission from participating local units of government to the U.S. Geological Survey.

There being no discussion, on a motion by Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Ms. Greene, and carried unanimously, the report relative to the contracts was accepted and placed on file (copy of report attached to Official Minutes).

RE-CREATION OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL AREAS IN SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN

Mr. Evenson recalled that the Commission had underway a work program to update the regional natural areas protection and management plan adopted by the Commission in 1997. That work, which was requested by the Gathering Waters Land Conservancy on behalf of itself and a group of land conservancy organizations functioning locally in southeastern Wisconsin, involves a review of the status of the natural area and critical species habitat sites identified in the original plan, including a determination of those that have been permanently preserved and protected, those that have been lost to development or other activity, and those that remain available for preservation and protection; a review of the plan implementation responsibility assignments made with respect to each site in the original plan; and the possible addition to the plan of selected other sites that have been identified over the past 10 years and that meet the criteria for site selection documented in the original plan. The Commission staff leading this effort is now ready to begin meeting with an advisory committee to review work done to date and to oversee the preparation of a plan amendment document. He noted that a proposed roster for such a committee had been provided in advance of the meeting and then reviewed the roster. The primary emphasis of the committee make-up, he said, involves participation by both public agencies and private entities heavily involved in implementation efforts, together with State agency personnel with expertise in this field and individuals from academic institutions that also have expertise in this field.

Following a brief discussion during which Chairman Buestrin suggested -- and the Committee concurred -- that the Commission staff contact Concordia University to inquire whether they may have an individual on faculty or staff with expertise to offer in this endeavor, on a motion by Mr. Drew, seconded by Mr. Morrison, and carried unanimously, the proposed Committee Roster was approved, including the possible addition of a representative from Concordia University. Mr. Evenson indicated that the staff would soon begin to contact the individuals involved to secure their participation in this work effort.

WORK PROGRAM REPORTS

During his report, Mr. Evenson briefly commented on the following current work program topics:

1. A meeting held recently with State Representative Scott Gunderson, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and representatives of the Wisconsin Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association, relative to Commission plan recommendations that large onsite sewage disposal systems serving multiple properties be overseen and managed by a public entity. The outcome of the meeting was a commitment by the Commission staff to review an alternative form of governance that involves the creation of a private utility district with public oversight to accomplish the same objectives. If such an approach were found to be reasonable and reliable, the Commission could recognize such private utility districts as a designated management agency in those implementation efforts attendant to the regional water quality management plan.
2. On behalf of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority, the Commission recently filed an application with the Federal Transit Administration for nearly \$7 million in Federal funds earmarked for continued implementation work attendant to the proposed Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail service. This application was made so that the approved Federal funds would not lapse. Should the State Legislature and Governor provide the RTA with applicable authority in the forthcoming State budget bill, the grant application would be transferred by the Commission to the RTA.
3. The Commission recently notified Waukesha County of the availability of additional Federal Transit funds granted to the Milwaukee Urbanized Area. The Commission staff determined that these funds, being made available under the Section 5309 Fixed Guideway Modernization Program, rightfully are to be directed to Waukesha County since the County is the responsible transit agency that operates bus services over the single FTA Fixed Guideway in the Milwaukee area, namely the reserved bus lanes on Bluemound Road between Moreland Road and Barker Road. The funds must be spent on projects related to the bus routes that use these reserved lanes. Presently, the FTA has fund allocations available of nearly \$250,000 in 2005, \$271,000 in 2006, and \$318,000 in 2007. If not used in a timely way, these funds will be recaptured by FTA.
4. In an ironic situation given the current flooding occurring along the Fox River in western Kenosha County, the Commission, acting on behalf of Kenosha County, returned \$300,000 to the Federal Emergency Management Agency intended to be used to acquire and remove homes in the subject floodplain. The Commission manages the Kenosha County Floodplain Buy-Out Program and was unable to find property owners willing to sell their homes to Kenosha County at the appraised value before the time limit set to use the funds ran out.
5. The Kenosha County Board and Kenosha County Executive have authorized Kenosha County staff to enter into a contract with the Commission to provide telecommunications engineering services beginning this fall. That contract is presently in preparation and likely will formally be reported at the next Committee meeting. Under the contract, the Commission would carry out

implementation activities attendant to the regional wireless telecommunications plan, including the preparation of a detailed broadband wireless plan for the County; the conduct of a demonstration effort to prove the concept involved, including the establishment of reliable wireless communications networks between base stations and public safety vehicles; and technical assistance in the full-scale deployment of such a wireless network should the concept prove feasible and acceptable to Kenosha County. The entire effort is expected to cost about \$160,000 and will involve the acquisition of communications equipment on behalf of the County and the retention of a consultant based in the Twin Cities area in Minnesota that has developed technology for the Federal government for wireless field communications in defense and domestic situations.

6. The Commission staff has been invited to attend a follow up meeting of elected officials in the Region, scheduled for Monday, August 27, 2007. That meeting, being convened by Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker, will continue to pursue discussions relative to the possible formation of a multi-county regional transit authority in as many as six counties of the Region, with that authority given the responsibility to comprehensively deliver transit services.

CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Evenson reported that the Commission had received a letter that day from the Chair of the Town of Bloomfield, Walworth County, requesting that the Commission definitively deal with a sewer service area expansion matter at the September Quarterly meeting. Mr. Evenson noted that this matter involves what is essentially a "turf" disagreement between the Village of Genoa City and the Town of Bloomfield, both of which own and operate public wastewater sewage treatment facilities, the latter operating through the Pell Lake Sanitary District. After reviewing the issues attendant to this matter, it was the consensus of the Committee that the matter likely cannot be dealt with at the September meeting, but rather probably will need to be delayed until the December Commission meeting in order to allow adequate time to determine whether or not a good-faith agreement can be reached between the Village and the Town relative to providing sewer service to the contested area via a connection to the Genoa City sewerage system.

Ms. Greene reported that the Environmental Justice Task Force had met recently and she believed that it was a good first meeting. The group was adequately briefed on the Commission and its activities relative to ensuring that Environmental Justice concerns are taken into account in the planning process. There were, she said, very good comments made by advocates representing minorities and low-income groups. She indicated that she was very hopeful that positive results will come from the work of the Task Force.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m., on a motion by Ms. Greene, seconded by Mr. Morrison, and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip C. Evenson
Deputy Secretary

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Attachments