SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS
STEERING COMMITTEE


Date:    Wednesday, May 29, 2019
Time: 9:30 a.m.
Place: ECWRPC Offices, 400 Ahnaip Street, Suite 100 Menasha, WI

Committee Members Present:
Martin Farrell (Chair) .............................................................. Fond du Lac County
Jerry Erdmann ........................................................................... Shawano County
Jeremy Johnson (Perm. Alt. for Laure Pecore) ........................................................ Menominee County
Jeff Nooyen (Vice Chair) ................................................................. Outagamie County
Dick Koeppen ........................................................................... Waupaca County
Alice Connors ........................................................................... Calumet County
Donna Kalata ........................................................................... Waushara County
Dave Albrecht (Perm. Alt. for Shiloh Ramos) ............................................... Winnebago County

Staff/Others Present:
Eric Fowle ........................................................................ Executive Director
Walt Raith ........................................................................ Assistant Director
Pam Scheibe-Johnson ................................................................ Controller

1) Welcome & Introductions

Chair Farrell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) Statement of Compliance with Wis. Stats. Sec. 19.84 Regarding Open Meetings Requirement

Mr. Fowle noted that the agenda was posted/distributed as required and that a quorum of members was present.

3) Pledge of Allegiance

4) Approval of Agenda

Mr. Erdmann motioned to approve the agenda as amended, Ms. Kalata seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5) Nominations and Election of Steering Committee Chair and Vice Chair for 2019-2020 Term
Ms. Kalata nominated Mr. Farrell to serve as chairman for the 2019-2020 term. Mr. Nooyen seconded the motion. Ms. Connors motioned that nominations be closed and that a unanimous ballot be cast for elections. Mr. Erdmann seconded the motion. The motion to cast a unanimous ballot passed unanimously.

Ms. Connors nominated Mr. Nooyen to serve as vice-chairman for the 2019-2020 term. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Ms. Connors moved that nominations be closed and a unanimous ballot be cast for Mr. Nooyen. Ms. Kalata seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

7) Approval of April 18, 2019 Meeting Summary of Proceedings

Ms. Connors motioned to approve the summary of proceedings, Mr. Erdmann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8) Announcements

a) AWRPC June 21 Annual Meeting, Green Bay

Mr. Fowle announced that the June 21st annual meeting of the AWRPC would be located in Green Bay. Mr. Fowle provided an overview of the upcoming event schedule, planned guest speakers, and venue details. Chairman Farrell will be attending the meeting along with other RPC leadership.

b) Employee Trust Fund (ETF) Insurance Changes

Ms. Scheibe-Johnson provided an overview of the Employee Trust Fund insurance changes. Ms. Scheibe-Johnson explained that there is speculation that the Department of Employee Trust funds is reviewing the possibility of removing the local employers from their plan. There is a state plan and a Wisconsin public employers plan for the local employers category. The reason is because the plans are very different and it is becoming difficult to administer that at some point in the future, the local employers may be removed from the coverage. An email was issued asking if any local employers would be interested in joining in the hopes that the group would become larger so it becomes worth the additional cost to administer or possibly that group gets removed. This would have a large impact on the budget should it come to fruition, because being a small group the premiums are going to be quite high.

There was brief discussion regarding the unfunded pension liability loan to Winnebago County, definition of pension vs. health insurance as regards this agenda item, and the impact of this potential change on the Commission.

c) Other
Mr. Fowle noted that the annual report was available and distributed through a variety of means.

Mr. Fowle also announced the Winnebago Waterways Initiative, specifically Allen Buechel, Mark Harris and Todd Romenesko would be receiving recognition as Champions of Conservation from the Lake Michigan Stakeholders at the Annual Lake Michigan Day Celebration to be held on August 9th in Manitowoc, WI.

Mr. Fowle announced that the Economic Development Administration (EDA) did fund the City of Oshkosh’s $1.5 million infrastructure grant which will allow for the industrial park road to be paved providing better access to businesses in the area. Mr. Raith commented that the transload facility is an asset to the whole region and this project will improve its usability.

There was brief discussion regarding the transload facility.

Mr. Fowle noted that the FHWA’s 4-year TMA certification process would be occurring on May 30th and described details of the review procedures.

9) New Business/Action Items

a) Provision of Commission Support for Port of Green Bay Proposed Intermodal Facility Project.

Mr. Raith provided an overview of the project. Currently there is a power plant in Green Bay at the Port of Green Bay. The plant is going to be eventually shut down and the vision for the site is to expand the Port of Green Bay and create an intermodal facility. This creates opportunity for containers to be shipped via truck or ship from Green Bay rather than transporting them to Chicago to be transported by train. This will have a positive impact on the I-41 Corridor and businesses in the area. The letter of support is for the City of Green Bay and Brown County purchasing this site. This project is not just for Green Bay but all of Northeast Wisconsin. Once this container facility becomes established it also opens up the possibility for more of the same type of facility where resources can be shared.

There was brief discussion regarding resource sharing within the region and the process regarding issuing a letter to distribute throughout the region.

Mr. Nooyen motioned to accept the provision of support, Ms. Kalata seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.


Ms. Scheibe-Johnson provided an overview of the resolution. This is required by the Department of Employee Trust funds as they have moved the controlling documents which is the contract with each one of the insurance providers. They have grouped them together into a manual and as a result of that change each one of the public employers that are participating in that health insurance coverage must pass a resolution because the controlling document has moved and is now part of that manual. This is a technicality.
Chair Farrell asked if this changed the current coverage. Ms. Scheibe-Johnson replied that this does not change the current coverage, that was specifically pointed out by the Department of Employee Trust Funds.

Ms. Connors motioned to approve the resolution, Mr. Koeppen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

c) CLOSED SESSION: The Committee will convene into closed session pursuant to section 19.85(1) of the Wisconsin Statutes to: 1) discuss personnel matters pertaining to the 2019 and 2020 ECWRPC Staffing Plan, and; 2) discuss matters pertaining to staff succession planning for the agency.

Mr. Erdmann motioned to move into closed session, Mr. Albrecht seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A unanimous roll call vote was held to move the committee into closed session. The motion passed unanimously.

d) RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION: The Committee will reconvene into open session pursuant to section 19.85(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes to take action, if necessary, on the above matters.

Mr. Albrecht motioned to reconvene into open session, Mr. Nooyen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10) Informational/Discussion Items:

a) Outagamie County Membership Issues

Mr. Fowle explained the following: that the agency received a letter from the county’s Corporation Counsel, results of receiving the communication, and ensuing meetings. Discussion took place regarding the letter, Commission bylaws and procedures, follow-up communication, upcoming meeting(s) to discuss the content, value of Commission services, structure and ability of RPCs, state statutes, decision of the Commission regarding involvement, current state of county budgets, upcoming meeting of Commission and Outagamie County staff, and value of Commission beyond measurable funds. The Committee shared concerns about Outagamie County’s position regarding membership and assisting their local communities stating that more information should be sought on how to resolve this issue.

b) 2020 Technical Assistance Program

Mr. Fowle noted that the technical assistance program notifications were issued much earlier this year to give communities more time to think about projects and also to integrate them into their budget discussions and deliberations since East Central moved to the fee schedule. Initial interest and some responses have been received through the website. An open house will be held on June 19th. Mr. Fowle briefly listed municipalities who had expressed interest in project assistance, explained the open house process, and encouraged communities to come visit.
c) Biennial Budgeting Proposal for Local Government

Mr. Fowle explained the biennial budgeting proposal for local government: biennial budget vs. annual budget, state statutes regarding budgets, and flexibility concerns regarding the Commission’s budget. Brief discussion took place regarding the subject.

d) Review & Discussion on Preliminary Changes to Commission Personnel Policies

Mr. Fowle noted that both he and Ms. Scheibe-Johnson have conducted a thorough review of the personnel policies and there are a few changes to be considered: definitions for work at home; change in office hours; updating the table of authorized positions salary schedule; minor benefit language change as regards health insurance, life insurance, and removal of the employee assistance program; professional development opportunities; replacement of Good Friday with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; outside employment; update of the grievance policy; adding a whistleblower policy; and additional verification to work from home. Mr. Fowle also stated that a draft of the changes would be provided at the next meeting.

e) Review & Discussion on Preliminary Changes to Commission Bylaws

Mr. Fowle explained that there needs to be a possible revision and clarification of quorum. There has been some confusion sometimes in standing committees and some committees are quite small. The updated definition would be to have even numbered committees have a quorum be defined as 50 percent. There would be some minor modifications to the execution of instruments, checks, and drafts section and to include a reference to the Financial Procedures Manual to ensure consistency with the other documents that the agency has. Mr. Fowle stated that a draft of the changes would be provided at the next meeting.

f) ECWRPC Strategic Planning

Mr. Fowle noted that this stems partly from the letter that was sent to the full Commission by the Economic Development Committee when the committee met jointly with the Regional Comprehensive Planning Committee. While it mainly focused on the agency’s capacity to continue to do Economic Development, particularly under the guise of Initiative 41, it alludes to bigger issues and conversations that happen with respect to strategic planning. An immediate result of this letter and joint meeting is that there is a scheduled Initiative 41 meeting of stakeholders on June 26th. Invitations have been issued not only to the stakeholders but also to both the Economic Development and Regional Comprehensive Planning Committees. The meetings will be informal, they will be listed as a quorum may be present. A report will be sent back to the full Commission. Overall, there is a need to update the strategic plan. Mr. Fowle listed some of the larger questions that had been brought to his attention regarding the Commission that will need to be discussed through this process as well as budget items that will need to be examined. Mr. Fowle also mentioned how much the Commission has progressed since the initial strategic plan was written and commented on how far it could yet be developed. Mr. Fowle also listed the updates needed to the plan.

There was brief discussion on how the plan could be developed and updated.
g) 2020 Levy Strategy

Mr. Fowle guided a preliminary overview and discussion of the upcoming annual levy decision, the five year levy projections, and projected potential for future work.

h) Initial Review of ECWRPC Fee Schedule for Changes

Mr. Fowle provided an overview of the changes regarding the fee schedule. Based on the experience of the first year working with the fee schedule, the largest issue that the agency has is the way some of the inventory projects are phrased by community size. Those inventories will be changed to a road mile basis, which will provide a more accurate estimate based on true costs.

There was brief discussion regarding the modification to basing cost on a road mile basis for the type of project listed and why it would be a beneficial change, and that the change to utilizing a fee schedule has been beneficial. A modified fee schedule will be presented at the next meeting.

11) County Issue Sharing / Roundtable Discussion

Items included in the roundtable discussions were as follows: Outagamie County sales tax, taxes, infrastructure cost increase, and county levy increase.

12) Next Meeting Dates & Agenda

The next meeting will be established at a later date.

13) Adjourn

Mr. Nooyen motioned to adjourn, Mr. Koeppen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 11:50.