

**Approved
MEETING MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: *Jeff Nooyen (Chair), Alice Connors (Vice Chair), Steven Abel, Dick Koeppen, Thomas Kautza, Jeremy Johnson (Perm. Alt. for Elizabeth Moses), Dave Albrecht (Perm. Alt. for Tom Egan)*

Date: September 20, 2023 @ 1:30 p.m. – In person

1. **Welcome and Introductions** – Chair Nooyen called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

2. **Roll Call**

A. Introduction of Alternates, Staff and Guests

Committee Members Present:

Alice Connors (Vice Chair)	Calumet County
Jeremy Johnson (Perm. Alt. for Elizabeth Moses)	Menominee County
Jeff Nooyen (Chair)	Outagamie County
Tom Kautza	Shawano County
Dick Koeppen (Virtual).....	Waupaca County
David Albrecht (Perm. Alt. for Tom Egan)	Winnebago County

Committee Members Absent (Excused):

Steve Abel	Fond du Lac County
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ECWRPC Staff and Guests:

Melissa Kraemer Badtke	Executive Director
Craig Moser	Deputy Director
Sara Otting.....	Controller
Leann Buboltz.....	Administrative Coordinator

3. **Approval of the Agenda/Motion to Deviate** - A motion was made by Vice Chair Connors and seconded Mr. Johnson to approve of the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

4. **Public Comment** – No public comments

5. **Approval of the Minutes of the July 28, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting** – a motion was made by Mr. Johnson and second by Mr. Kautza to approve of the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Announcements and Discussion Items**

A. Director’s Report presented by Melissa Kraemer-Badtke (List not all inclusive)

Staffing Updates: East Central recently hired Brice Richardson and Abby Mader for the Associate Transportation Planner Positions. Ms. Kraemer-Badtke share that staff are excited to have Brice and Abby join the transportation team. The Principal Planner position as well as the SRTS Planner position are open yet.

Innovation in Planning Award: At the Wisconsin American Planning Association meeting on Thursday, September 21, 2023, East Central staff was presented with the APA – WI Innovation Award for the work on the Equitable Engagement Toolkit and Guidebook. The purpose of this project was to create a toolkit, complementary guidebook, and training tools to enhance ECWRPC’s and local communities’ engagement efforts surrounding transportation-related plans and projects. Ms. Kraemer-Badtke went on record to congratulate the Transportation Team that assisted in the development of the Equitable Engagement Toolkit and Guidebook

Economic Development Program

1. **Rural Partners Network Project:** East Central staff met with Economic Development Administration leadership along with the Menominee Tribal Nation to discuss their rural

partners network project and EDA grant. The EDA Deputy Secretary from Washington DC was in attendance to join in the conversation(s).

2. **Specialized Transportation Coordination Plans:** East Central staff has been working with member counties to complete their specialized transportation coordination plans. The member County meetings have been completed and the draft plans are being developed

- B. **Discussion on Tentative 2024 Executive Committee and Commission Board Meeting Schedule.** Mr. Moser and Ms. Kraemer-Badtke entered into a Board discussion on the need to alter the scheduled dates designated for the members to meet. They shared that it is anticipated that the April Committee and Board meetings would be changed based on the election and reorganization process for the Counties. The Team suggested having Committee and Commission Board meetings in March and also having a Commission Board Orientation, Commission Board and Commission Annual meeting. Another area for discussion was the day and time the Commission Board meetings should be held on. The Commission Quarterly Meeting date is noted in the by-laws to be held on the last Friday. Members stated that Friday's are problematic and a change in the by-law could be a positive move. Possible options were discussed with the Executive Committee; Ms. Kraemer-Badtke stated that staff would development a 2024 schedule and provide it at the next Commission meeting.

7. **New Business/Action Items**

- A. **Discussion and action on the WisDOT Concurrence Letter for 2024 Funding established for State Metropolitan Planning Organizations.** Ms. Kraemer-Badtke reported that every 10 years, in alignment with the release of the US Census date, the MPOs across the State and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation staff discuss the funding levels for the MPO Planning Program Funding. For the Commission, this would include the Appleton (Fox Cities)/Oshkosh MPOs and the Fond du Lac MPO (East Central serves as staff for the MPO). She also noted that Federal planning funds are split by population into two categories: Transportation Management Areas (TMAs – areas over 200,000 in population; this would include the Appleton (Fox Cities) MPO) and Non-TMA MPOs (areas with a population between 50,000-200,000; this would include the Oshkosh MPO and the Fond du Lac MPO). The Transportation Management Areas (Green Bay, Appleton, Milwaukee, and Madison) agreed to contribute up to 3% of the federal funding to cover a supplemental contribution to fund a minimum amount for the Non-TMA MPOs, so they are able to have two full time staff members at each non-TMA MPO (this would include the Fond du Lac MPO). Staff recommended approval of the concurrence letter that establishes the 2024 funding for the State MPO.

A motion was made by Mr. Kautza and second by Mr. Albrecht to approve of the WisDOT Concurrence Letter. Motion carried unanimously.

- B. **Discussion regarding the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program for the Transportation Program -**
A copy of the draft can be viewed at the following website:
<https://www.ecwrpc.org/programs/transportation/work-program-and-budget/>.

Ms. Kraemer-Badtke reported that staff received the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program kickoff memo from WisDOT dated August 11, 2023 (attached), which included preliminary MPO allocations of Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding from Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. *NEW-The waiver of the local match requirement for the Metropolitan Planning (PL) funds in support of Section 11206 (Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options) of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).* The memo also indicated that the allocations for Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options (SATO) are eligible for 100% reimbursement if used for Completed Streets/SATO eligible planning activities and specifically detailed as such within the MPO's 2024 UPWP, due to a waiver of the local match requirement. This information was not factored into the 2024 preliminary budget approved by the Commission at the July 28th meeting. Due to this change, \$52,288.41 of local levy that had been budgeted as local match is now available for levy reduction or reallocation. At this time, this was provided to the Executive Committee as an informational item where staff is looking for feedback regarding the local levy that was initially budgeted as local match for the Appleton/Oshkosh MPO Programs. Member discussion took place and the majority felt that the \$52,288.41 should be kept in the general fund – ear marking the amount for future needs that may come up. The 2024

Unified Work Program and Budget will be placed on the Transportation Committee October meeting agenda for their consideration.

- C. Discussion regarding the hiring SERDI to develop a board assessment. Mr. Moser – Deputy Director, shared that in December the Commission leadership staff was contacted by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO). He reported that NADO is currently developing an executive director training manual template that will be shared with regional councils of government and regional planning commissions across the country. One of the recommendations from the peer organizations, was to work with the Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) to conduct a board assessment. SERDI is a voluntary professional development association for regional council executive directors in the southeastern portion of the United States. Mr. Moser noted that the cost of the SERDI Assessment Process is \$4,500 plus travel reimbursement of SERDI staff costs related to the process, with a possible timeline projected to launch in February, 2024 with final report delivery in June, which would align with 2025 Preliminary Budget process. Staff did not have a recommendation however; the leadership team appreciated any feedback regarding the Board Assessment with SERDI. Upon member discussion it was noted that staff should continue moving forward with this project.
- D. Approval of the 2024 Employee Health Insurance, Dental Coverage & Vision Program presented by Sara Otting–Controller. Ms. Otting presented three proposals which detail the various health insurance premium options for 2024. The proposals are as follows.
- Proposal B: Minimum amounts allowed by the state. The employee portion would be 12%- Commission portion would be 88%.
 - Proposal C: The employee portion would be 16%-the Commission portion would be 84% and
 - **Proposal D: The employee portion would remain at 19%-the Commission portion would remain at 81%. While this would increase the employee premium and the Commission premium, it remains the current employee and Commission shares.**

She noted that East Central leadership is recommending Option D for the health insurance contributions. This splits the increase evenly between the employees and the Commission.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Connors and a second by Mr. Albrecht to approve of Option D as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

- E. Discussion regarding the Commission's 2024 Special Projects presented by Ms. Kraemer-Badtke and Mr. Moser. They include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. **Appleton/Fox Cities & Oshkosh MPO Policy Board Restructuring** – During the recent federal Appleton Transportation Management Area Certification Review, it was communicated that a restructuring of the Policy Board would be required. Ms. Kraemer-Badtke shared that, upon reaching out to Federal Highway, a proposed timeline for completion would be 18-24 months roughly. It would include a redesignation by the Governor's office and our Board. Chair Nooyen commented that once resolved, this restructuring would eliminate the redundancy of items for the Commissioners to review at the Quarterly meetings and possibly would reduce the amount of times the Commissioners would need to meet annually.
 2. **SERDI Assessment of ECWRPC** – Mr. Moser shared that the objective of this independent, third-party review of the Commission is to develop strategies to maximize East Central's support and assistance to its member counties. Should the Commission approve of this work, staff will be involved in assisting the consultant with various aspects of the project.
 3. **Potential Office Relocation** – Mr. Moser shared that the lease for the current office space expires on July 31, 2024. He noted that if the Commission would make the decision to relocate, staff would work to minimize impacts with the anticipation of at least a week of lost productive time related to this transition.
 4. **Staff Training** – With at least 5 new staff joining the team in 2023, a significant focus over the next 12 – 18 months will be on training and professional development. The Team is

working to identify high quality, cost effective training options to provide staff the tools and support needed to excel in their roles.

5. **Website Update** – This project has been on the radar but deferred due to more pressing matters, aligning this work with the MPO restructuring and potential office move would be coordinated. It would also align with a branding refresh we're currently working to integrate into all Commission materials.
6. **Server Replacement/Potential Software Investments** – Mr. Moser shared that staff have budgeted for the replacement of the server in 2024, as the warranty expires in July. He shared that staff is in the process of evaluating several potential software programs that could increase operational efficiency and organizational effectiveness. The final recommendations and implementation will be deferred until after the SERDI assessment is completed, should the Commission approve of that work.
7. **Evaluation of Economic Development Program Enhancement** – Following the 5-year update to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy staff will be identifying how best the Commission can play a larger role in implementing the recommendations, especially in the rural communities. Several potential options were identified but the implementation would be deferred until after the SERDI assessment is completed, if approved.

- F. **CLOSED SESSION:** The Committee will convene into closed session pursuant to Section 19.85(1)(e) of the Wisconsin Statutes to discuss strategy regarding ongoing negotiations with another entity so as not to compromise the Commission's bargaining position and Section 19.85(1)(c) of the Wisconsin Statutes to consider and discuss personnel matters, 2024 staffing plan, and compensation. A motion was made by Mr. Kautza and second by Mr. Albrecht to go into closed session via roll call vote, with the time noted at 2:27 pm.

Jeff Nooyen	Aye
Alice Connors	Aye
Steve Abel	Excused
Dick Koeppen	Aye (Virtual)
Jeremy Johnson	Aye
David Albrecht	Aye

- G. **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. A motion was made by Mr. Kautza and second by Mr. Albrecht to reconvene into open session with the time noted at 3:15 pm.

i. No action taken from closed session discussions

8. Informational/Discussion Items

- A. County Roundtable Discussion (*as time permits*) - None

9. Establish Time and Place for Next Commission Meeting

- A. **Executive Committee Meeting:** *The next Executive Committee meeting will be Wednesday – October 18, 2023 at 1:30 p.m.- Virtual. (August Meeting Canceled)*
- B. **Commission Meeting:** *The next Commission meeting will be held on Friday, October 27, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. Information will be forthcoming.*

10. **Adjourn** – A motion was made by Mr. Albrecht and second by Vice Chair Connors to adjourn with the time noted at 3:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Leann Buboltz – Administrative Coordinator
ECWRPC